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THE

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THE

# ANTIQUITIES OF EGYPT.

## CHAPTER I.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO EGYPT.

EGYPT is situated in the centre of the ancient world. It lies between Asia and Africa, which has led to some ambiguity in the writings of modern geographers, by whom it is sometimes called an Asiatic, and sometimes an African country. It is separated from Europe by the Mediterranean, a sea of no great extent, and easy of navigation; so that it was well adapted by its position to communicate to other nations the civilization for which it was celebrated at a very early period, and which was always supposed to have originated there.

This country was formerly divided into three great provinces. Upper Egypt, or the Thebaid, was the southern portion of the valley of the Nile, in which was situated one of the great capitals of the whole empire, Thebes. Several modern towns and villages, Luxor, Karnac, Gournou, etc., now occupy the site of this once vast city; and the stupendous remains of ancient buildings which are found in the neighbourhood of them all, still bear ample testimony to the former magnificence of Thebes.

Middle Egypt, which lies immediately to the north of the Thebaid, was called in ancient times the Heptanomis, from the seven nomes, or counties, into which it was formerly divided.

The northern portion was called Lower Egypt; and here once stood the other great capital of the whole empire, Memphis. But the three great pyramids of Ghizeh, the colossal sphynx in their neighbourhood, and the tombs hewn in the rocky platform on which they are erected, are the only remains of its former greatness. The hand of the spoiler has pressed heavily upon it, and the site of ancient Memphis is now covered with a forest of date palms.

The vicinity of Egypt, however, to the land of Canaan, from which it is only separated by the portion of Arabia Petræa which extends to the shores of the Mediterranean, is the circumstance in its geographical position which renders its history and antiquities so peculiarly interesting and important. The Greek historians often allude to the relations, literary, political and commercial, that had at all times existed between the two countries, and their consequent interchange of manners and customs. But we know the fact upon far better authority. The Scriptures of truth inform us that the oriental name of Egypt, מצרים, Mizraim, is also that of the third son of Ham, by whose descendants it was first peopled, as well as the neighbouring countries. They also inform us that it was Canaan, the first born of Ham, who gave his name to the country which was afterwards colonized by his family, Gen. x. 6. 13. 20. This affinity would itself tend to promote close intercourse between the two neighbouring nations, Egypt and Canaan.

When Abram, in obedience to the call of God, had traversed the land of Canaan, and received that blessing which made it likewise the land of promise, he continued his journey into Egypt. The occasion of this removal into another country was a famine; and we may reasonably conclude, that others of the inhabitants of Canaan would be driven by the same necessity to migrate in the same direction, Gen. xii. 1—10. Thus Egypt would appear to have been the storehouse and granary of the neighbouring nations, and especially of the southern parts of Canaan and of Arabia, even at this early period, which affords us another proof of a constant intercourse between them. The periodical inundations of the Nile render the fertility of Egypt independent of the rain, which is indispensable to the productiveness of other countries. Moreover, the art of agriculture among the Egyptians was then considerably in advance of the Canaanites, who were principally feeders of cattle. Thence also probably arose the famines which are mentioned in its early history, though afterwards it became a land, the inhabitants whereof ate the increase of their fields, which not only flowed with milk and honey, but abounded in the fat of the kidneys of wheat, and in the pure blood of the grape, Deut. xxxiii. 14. The tenor of the history would seem to imply, that though the famine was grievous in the land of Canaan, there was abundance in Egypt; for it proceeds to relate that Abram returned from thence after a short sojourn greatly enriched, Gen. xii. 14—20; xiii. 2.

The next event in the order of time in which Egypt is connected with the inspired narrative, seems providentially adapted to continue the intercourse and connexion between

that country and Canaan, when the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham should extirpate the aboriginal inhabitants of the latter country, and thus dissolve the tie of blood relationship which existed between the Egyptians and the wicked descendants of the first-born of Ham, to whom that blessing was a curse. Abraham had long since departed to the presence of the God who condescended to call him his Friend. But we read that his descendants became great and powerful, made wars and achieved conquests, Gen. xxxiv.; yet they remained shepherds, tending their flocks according to the customs of those primitive times, Gen. xxxvii. 12. We read also of the Midianitish Arabs traversing the sea of sand that separates Asia from Africa, with their camels laden with the fragrant productions of the happier portions of their wild country, to be exchanged for the corn and wine of Egypt, and trafficking with the Israelitish shepherd princes for the liberty of their younger brother, a stripling who had roused their jealousy by relating the prophetic dreams wherein God had forewarned him and his family of his future greatness. With a daring and fierce impiety, highly characteristic, nevertheless, of the hazardous and laborious occupation of shepherds in the wilderness, they resolve at once, by murdering their brother, to turn the counsel of the Lord into foolishness. Through the wiser and more politic advice of Judah, Joseph was sold into Egypt, and thenceforth for 500 years the scene of the inspired narrative is laid in that country, Gen. xxxvii.

Joseph was carried into Egypt as a captive, and sold to the captain of the king's guard for a household slave. He who was his father's beloved son, the son of his bosom, the

child of his old age, must now work and suffer and weep in the house of bondage. But "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." God had heard the prayers of the fond parent, and remembered the affliction of his beloved son. He blessed Joseph's master for his sake, and he "was a prosperous man;" and, far better, he created in Joseph a clean heart and renewed a right spirit within him; and the youth kept himself pure in the hour of grievous temptation. Cast into the dungeon as a criminal through a false accusation, God was still with him in the prison, and made all that he did to prosper. He that hath God with him need fear no evil; but shall find him, even as Joseph did, a very present help in the time of trouble, Gen. xxxix.

Thus did God work "signs in Egypt, and wonders in the field of Zoan." The entire history of the Israelites in Egypt is a series of miracles. God imparted unto Joseph the gift of the interpretation of dreams, Gen. xl.; thus making manifest his presence with him to all them that stood by: but still "until the time that his word came, the word of the Lord tried him." Then after that he had suffered awhile according to His will, Gen. xli. 1, "the king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free." When he appeared before Pharaoh and his assembled princes, the dreams that had put to confusion "all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof," presented no difficulty to him. Divinely inspired, and full of the wisdom of God, he spake as an oracle. He warned the monarch of the coming danger; he clearly pointed out the remedy. Thus the true God was glorified in him; for "Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such an one as this is, a man in whom the

Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou," Gen. xli. 38—40. Wonderful indeed were the ways of God towards Joseph! He who just before had been brought hastily out of a dungeon, ver. 14, is now arrayed in vestures of fine linen; he has Pharaoh's ring upon his hand, and a gold chain about his neck; he rides in Pharaoh's second chariot, and they cry before him, Bow the knee; and so they made him ruler over all the land of Egypt, ver. 37—44.

Joseph immediately proceeded to exemplify the wisdom with which he had been so graciously endowed, by putting his plans into execution. "And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt," ver. 46, arranging everywhere, as the sequel shows, that the utmost advantage should be taken of the coming seven years of plenty; building granaries, and appointing officers to superintend the purchase of the corn, and making all other needful preliminary arrangements. Thus prepared for the best improvement of the promised blessing, he reaped its full benefit. "And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number," ver. 47—50.

The plenty was in the land of Egypt alone, but the dearth

that followed, according as Joseph had said, was in all lands. Through the prudent foresight wherewith God had endowed Joseph, and through that alone, "in all the land of Egypt there was bread." Nor did these his gifts pass unacknowledged by Pharaoh and his subjects. He, in whose hands are the hearts of kings as the rivers of water, Prov. xxi. 1, gave to the monarch discernment to perceive the excellence of the spirit that was in Joseph, and to leave in his charge the trust that he had so well fulfilled. "When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do. And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians," Gen. xli. 55, 56. But still the famine increased; "it waxed sore in all the land of Egypt," and, by the mysterious arrangement of Divine Providence, the fame of Joseph, as a prophet in foretelling the coming evil, and as a ruler in providing for its alleviation, increased also.

But the famine was sore in all lands. The heaven above was brass, the earth beneath was iron, the rain of all that region was powder and dust. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn; and thereby the riches of the world were poured into the coffers of Pharaoh. Thus did God bless Joseph, and Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Joseph's sake.

The dearth reached the tents of Jacob also; and, by the command of their father, Joseph's ten brethren were sent down with their beasts of burden to buy corn in Egypt. "But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him." All was accomplished: that dreamer whom they

would have slain, whose cries for mercy they disregarded, "was the governor over the land; and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed themselves before him, with their faces to the earth," Gen. xlii. 1—6. "There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand," Prov. xix. 21; and these fierce men, whose only law would seem hitherto to have been their own wills, shall now discover their guilt, and acknowledge the righteous retribution of God. They were alarmed at the rough manner in which the personage before whom they appeared accosted them, at his unexpected demand of their youngest brother, and at the harsh usage they received at his hands. After passing three days in prison, they were again brought before the brother whom they had so deeply injured, and again bowed themselves with their faces to the earth. He propounded to them the hard conditions upon which alone he would allow them to purchase corn, or even to leave the country—a hostage of one of their number, to remain in perpetual servitude, unless they bereaved their aged father of the last remembrance of his beloved Rachel, and tore away Benjamin from his bosom; exposing his tender years to the dangers and privations of a journey across the desert. Then was it that their consciences suddenly awakened, and they felt that the hand of God was upon them, to punish them for their iniquity. "And they said one to another, We were verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us," Gen. xlii. 1—23.

If we were in search of evidence by which the truth of the inspired narrative is to be established, it were easy to

show the perfect consistency with itself of every thing that is told us of these fierce men, whose passions were almost as ruthless as the beasts of the desert with whom they had to contend in defence of their flocks. They appear exactly the characters which the wandering and perilous life they led would have a tendency to form. In what but the reality could such portraitures have originated? Whence but from the strictest regard to truth could it have been told us that such were nevertheless the fathers of the chosen race?

Joseph's conduct on this occasion shows that he was still under the entire guidance of the wisdom of God; that His Spirit spake by him, and His word was upon his lips. He had now the means of ample vengeance in his power for the outrage that his brethren had committed against him. Their lives and properties were in his hands; but no thought of revenge was in his heart. His only design in afflicting them was to lead them to repentance. The first expression of sorrow of those who had formerly laughed at his agonies, and treated his cries for mercy with derision, melted him into tenderness. "And he turned himself about from them, and wept," ver. 24. What is man when left to his natural corruption! How great the contrast when Divine grace has formed the image of God in his heart!

Joseph retained Simeon in fetters, who had probably suggested his murder in the wilderness: see Gen. xlix. 5—7. He then allowed the rest to set out on their return with their supplies of corn, putting every man's money in the mouth of his sack, with the evident intention of keeping alive those penitential fears that his manner had excited in them. Their consternation at the discovery of this per-

plexing circumstance, Gen. xlii. 35, the deep distress of Jacob when he heard the only condition on which they would again be permitted to visit Egypt, ver. 36—38, the continuance of the famine, chap. xliii. 1, which compelled him, nevertheless, to submit to it, ver. 2. 13, the tender father's parting benediction, ver. 14, their appearance the second time in Joseph's presence, ver. 15, and their hospitable entertainment at his house, ver. 16—34, are all related with a particularity to which we find no parallel in this early portion of the inspired narrative; and we naturally infer from hence the importance of the transactions recorded as a part of God's dealings with his people written for our learning.

They set out on their second departure from Egypt with corn, but they were not allowed to proceed on their journey: once more they were brought as criminals before the presence of Joseph, and once more "he laid to their charge things that they knew not." But the full and heartfelt acknowledgment of the sin whereof their consciences were afraid, which this accusation wrung from Judah, the most highly gifted with mental endowments of all his brethren, evidently shows that Joseph had been supernaturally directed in the whole transaction, and that the hiding of the cup in Benjamin's sack was one means whereby his brethren were to be brought to repentance, Gen. xliv.

The touching eloquence of Judah's address to Joseph, to which no equal will be found in any uninspired writing, was scarcely needed to move the relentings of him to whom he spake. His brother's heart was full already. "Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, and he cried, Cause every man to go

out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he wept aloud. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence," Gen. xlv. 1—3. The tender and affectionate manner in which he proceeded to soothe their sorrow, and to secure their confidence, is a most beautiful exemplification of the efficacy of that grace under the influence of which he so eminently glorified the Giver of it. No word of reproach or even of forgiveness escapes his lips. He passes on to dwell upon the great and glorious purpose which God had made their conduct subserve, and the benefits which would especially accrue to themselves as a family from his providential dealings with their family. "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives with a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God," ver. 5—8.

How intricate was the plan of Providence whereby God brought about the sojourn of his people in Egypt! The head of the chosen house, he who as a prince with God and with man had prevailed, is nevertheless cruelly imposed upon by his worthless children. He knew the coat which they had torn from their innocent brother, and dipped in blood, and he said, "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces,"

Gen. xxxvii. 33. He mourned for him in sackcloth and ashes many days. Year after year elapsed, but still "he wept for Joseph." The God whom he loved and served "blessed Joseph for his sake," and blessed him also. "He told his wanderings; he put his tears in his bottle." He communed with him in his devotions. He guided him in his difficulties. He doubtless spake often with him, but He sent no tidings of Joseph, until the day that, fifteen years afterwards, "he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him. And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." O God, "thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known!" Psa. lxxvii. 19. Give us grace to commit our souls unto thee in well-doing in the day of thy darkest providence, seeing that thou hast in thy word declared that "light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," Psa. xcvii. 11, that "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy," and that "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," Psa. cxxvi. 5, 6.

So "Israel came unto Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham." A most remarkable succession of miracles was manifested in the accomplishment of this purpose of the Almighty. The heaven above and the earth beneath, the hearts of kings and the destinies of nations, are all made to obey new and unwonted impulses; the rain of heaven is withholden, the land of Canaan is as the desert of Sinai, the Nile of Egypt shrinks and dries up between its banks at the period of inundation, and the son of the shepherd of Canaan rules over Egypt that a posterity may

be preserved in the earth to that race in whom all the "families thereof were to be blessed, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." Surely those to whom the truth is precious cannot regard without interest a country, the peculiarities of whose natural situation were from so early a period made to subserve this great purpose of our God, by keeping alive and perpetuating the family wherefrom, by His determinate counsel and foreknowledge, that Saviour should afterwards be born who should be "the Light of the world," and to whom all the ends thereof should look and be saved.

The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, and their cattle, and their goods which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Gen. xlvi. 5, 6. With the entire consent of Pharaoh, Joseph's brethren dwelt in the land of Goshen, which is said, on the authority of Jerome, to be in the portion of Egypt which was afterwards called by the Greeks the Delta, on account of its resemblance in form to that letter of their alphabet, Δ. Its triangular shape is occasioned by the many branches or mouths into which the Nile once divided itself before falling into the Mediterranean sea. It was that part of the Delta which is traversed by the Eastern or Pelusiac branch of the Nile which has generally been supposed to have been the land of Goshen. The failure of the inundation for the two years preceding the entrance of the children of Israel into Egypt, and the knowledge which Joseph possessed that there were yet five years wherein (through the failure of that phenomenon) there should be neither earing nor harvest, would render it a most desirable residence for them during this distressing period. The

depressed level of the Delta, as compared with the higher portions of the valley of the Nile, would give it the utmost advantage of the inundations, which never entirely disappear at their season in that extraordinary country, and without which Egypt would soon be as the deserts that surround it. On the other hand, when the years of famine should have passed away, this would still be the district of all others the best adapted to the occupations and to the prosperity of a tribe of shepherds. The Delta was abundantly watered by the innumerable mouths through which the Nile poured itself into the Mediterranean. The water of this noble river is also proverbially wholesome, and the loam which its inundations deposit proverbially fertile; so that it abounds in rich pasturage during nine months of the year. While in the three months of inundation the wilderness of Sinai, in which the greater part of their lives had been passed hitherto, and with the fertile places of which they were therefore perfectly familiar, would afford a safe and easily accessible refuge to themselves and their cattle. Thus favourably situated for the prosecution of their worldly occupation, and, above all, thus blessed by Him whose good hand had guided them thither, no wonder that when Israel dwelt in Egypt, in the land of Goshen, they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly, Gen. xlvii. 27.

Joseph still continued his faithful and devoted services to his God in heaven, and to the king, his master upon earth. All the money, that is, all the silver and the gold (for coined money was unknown in ancient Egypt) of Egypt and of Canaan he had gathered up, and deposited in Pharaoh's

treasure cities. But still the famine increased, and still the garners of Joseph were unexhausted, Gen. xlvii. 14, 15. The cattle of Egypt are next added by him to the possessions of Pharaoh. Another year passes, and there is neither earing nor harvest, and again the land of Egypt is suppliant at Joseph's feet for the bread by which the lives of its inhabitants are to be sustained. "And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's," Gen. xlvii. 20. The land and its inhabitants being thus absolutely at his disposal, the wisdom of God directed him to that equitable adjustment of the claims of the monarch on the one hand, and of his subjects on the other, which consolidated the government of Egypt upon a firm and settled basis, and thus repaid to the Egyptians sevenfold into their own bosoms the benefits they had conferred on the people whom God had chosen. The fifth of the entire produce of the land belonged to the state; on the condition of the payment of this impost, the land, and probably the cattle also, were returned to their original possessors. This clear definition of the respective rights of the sovereign and of the subject continued to be the law of Egypt long after the death of Joseph, and most probably until the final dissolution of the monarchy, ver. 26. The social compact (so to speak) between the ruler and the ruled, was to be renewed; and the same God, whose mighty operation had produced this extraordinary anomaly, had also removed from Pharaoh and his subjects the will and the power to oppose its adjustment; placing the destinies of both in the hands of one whom He had eminently endowed with wisdom. In this probably consisted the

secret of the orderly and prosperous condition of Egypt in after ages; and of those mild and equitable laws which, 1500 years later, excited the admiration and astonishment of the Greeks, who at once recognized in them the immediate cause of that prosperity.

Thus did God begin to fulfil in Joseph the promise that He had made to Abraham his forefather; "Thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Gen. xii. 2, 3. It was, however, but the beginning; for a greater than Joseph is here. Truly the God of his father did help him, and the Almighty did bless him with blessings of the heaven above, and blessings of the deep that lieth under. Blessings greater than those of his progenitors, were on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brethren, Gen. xlix. 25, 26. Yet, nevertheless, Joseph was only the means in God's hands whereby He kept alive on the earth the chosen race whence that Saviour was to be born who should be the fulfilment of His promise, and the source of every blessing which He has to bestow upon mankind. Egypt on this, as on other occasions, was the casket wherein this precious treasure was deposited.

The inspired narrative relates, that Joseph married an Egyptian, Asenath, or As-neith, the daughter of Potipherah, the priest of On; a city which was afterwards called Heliopolis by the Greeks, Gen. xli. 45. We are also informed that in name, in dress, in language, and in manners, (doubtless, so far only as was consistent with the service of the God to whom he was so eminently devoted,) he appeared as an Egyptian, Gen. xlii. 23.

After the emigration of the children of Israel into Egypt, the allusions to these subjects which occur in the inspired narrative lead us to infer that their manners and customs were conformed, in a great degree, to those of their adopted country. At the death of Jacob, "Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days," Gen. l. *2, 3.* The custom of embalming the dead has been conjectured, with much probability, to have originated in the very peculiar climate of Egypt. In a country which, three months every year, is under water, and at the same time exposed to a burning sun, it is evidently of the utmost importance that all decomposition, both of vegetable and animal substances, should be prevented. Probably this was the motive of the Egyptians for embalming both men and animals, a custom which was universal among them. The plague, which now makes its appearance in Egypt annually on the subsidence of the Nile, and often commits such ravages on that and the surrounding countries, was unknown in ancient times, and seems first to have been heard of after the conversion of Egypt to Christianity, and somewhere about the period when the zealous preaching of St. Anthony, and others of the fathers of the desert, had abolished the practice of embalming there as an idolatrous custom.

The account here given in Scripture of the time occupied by the process of embalming, corresponds, in a remarkable manner, with that which Herodotus (a Greek author, who visited Egypt about 450 years before the coming of Christ)

has told us* regarding the most costly process of embalming used by the Egyptians. It consisted of two parts. The removal of the more perishable portions of the body, washing them and the body itself frequently with palm wine, oil of cedar, and other antiseptic preparations; then filling the cavities with pounded myrrh, cassia, and similar odoriferous drugs, was the commencement of the operation. Afterwards the body, thus prepared, was steeped in a strong infusion of natron, a natural salt which occurs abundantly in the deserts that surround Egypt. These processes occupied seventy days. From the inspired account of the embalming of Israel, it may be inferred that the first of them, which was properly the embalming, occupied forty days, and that during the rest of the time the body was steeped in the infusion of natron. The public mourning in Egypt for seventy days, which took place on the death of Israel, is also in accordance with the usages of that country, and highly illustrative of the esteem in which Jacob was held there for Joseph's sake. According to Diodorus, the Sicilian,† (a Greek author, who was in Egypt about forty years before our Saviour's coming,) on the death of a king, the Egyptians put on mourning apparel, and closed all their temples for seventy-two days, during which time the embalming of the body proceeded. It was therefore the mourning of a king which was ordered by Pharaoh for the father of Joseph.

The account of the funeral procession conveys to us also a correct idea of the manners of Egypt, to which Joseph and his brethren conformed themselves. The chariots and the horsemen, the lamentation at the threshing-floor of Atad, and the entire ceremony with which the remains of

* Euterpe, c. 85. † Historiarum, lib. i. c. 72.

Jacob were committed to the cave in the field of Machpelah, seem to have been foreign to the usages of the Canaanites; and therefore the place where it had occurred was named, "Abel mizraim," The mourning of the Egyptians, Gen. l. 7—13.

When the patriarch Joseph had fulfilled the work which God had given him to do, and the days on earth which he had assigned to him, we find that he also was embalmed and put into a coffin, ver. 26, still conforming to the Egyptian usage, of which so many examples occur in all collections of the antiquities of that country. We reasonably conclude that other customs also, as well as funeral ceremonies, were copied by the Hebrews from the Egyptians. Probably it was from this highly civilized people, in the midst of whom "the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty," Exod. i. 7, that they also learned the arts of settled life, during the long period that the land of Egypt was filled with them.

But "Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation," ver. 6. Having now considered the marvellous works whereby God brought Israel into Egypt, it remains for us to tell how that with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm, and with signs and great wonders, he brought them forth again unto the lot of their inheritance. He had promised this deliverance to Israel when he went forth to go down into Egypt, Gen. xlvi. 4; he had renewed the promise to Joseph when he was about to die, Gen. l. 24; and "hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Num. xxiii. 19. Another event in the history of Egypt shall again subserve the Divine purpose, in regard of his people Israel.

"Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph," Exod. i. 8. One of those changes of dynasty or reigning family which were so frequent in the history of Egypt had taken place, and the accounts which the Greek historians have put upon record, give us some idea of its character. Between the times of the visit of Abram to Egypt, and Joseph's being brought there a captive, the reigning monarch, a native Egyptian called Timaus, was driven from the throne by the invasion of a tribe from the north-east, who are termed shepherds, and who obtained entire possession of the country; the conqueror Salathis becoming the founder of a new race of kings. It was, according to the Jewish historian Josephus,* under the reign of the fourth of these kings that Joseph flourished in Egypt. The Egyptian priests, on whose sole authority the Greeks received their account, revile exceedingly these shepherd kings, as tyrants and barbarians, who retained possession of the country by force of arms, only for the purpose of plundering and destroying the public monuments, and oppressing the people. It is probable that this new dynasty meditated some change in the religion of Egypt, and therefore destroyed many of the existing temples; which will account for the extreme hatred in which their memories were held by the priesthood: for we know, on the authority of the word of God, that they were by no means the tyrants and barbarians which the priests describe them to be. They assumed the manners of the Egyptians, and governed according to their laws, and whatever alterations they may have designed in the worship to be conducted by the

* Contra Apionem, lib. i. § 14, c. 8.

priesthood, they certainly respected its temporal rights. See Gen. xlvii. 22. 26. The last of the race is also admitted by themselves to have amended the Egyptian calendar, or computation of time. Moreover, the name given to the Pharaoh under whom Joseph flourished, "Aphophis," is an opprobrious epithet, signifying "giant, serpent, accursed one;" and this circumstance in itself gives some ground to the conjecture that there may have been much of blindness and bigotry in the hatred of the Egyptian priesthood to the memory of these shepherd kings.

About seventy years after the death of Joseph, however, the native princes, who had always retained the possession of some portion of Upper Egypt, were enabled, not improbably through the intrigues of the priesthood, to regain the throne, and expel these intruders. The "king which knew not Joseph," would be of this new dynasty, or reigning family. The singular favour with which the Israelites had been regarded by their immediate predecessors would be in itself a sufficient ground of jealousy on the part of the conquerors; and the more so, because, though expelled from Egypt Proper, the shepherds still hung on its eastern borders, where they were building cities and fortifying camps. All these circumstances seem probable from the narrative of Holy Writ. And Pharaoh "said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us," Exod. i. 9, 10. "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses," Exod. i. 11. The

blessing of the God of their fathers was however upon the Israelites in their captivity; for "the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour," ver. 12—14. The determination of Pharaoh and his counsellors to repress the further increase of the children of Israel by means of the horrible expedient of infanticide, endeavouring in the first place to compass their wicked end through fraud, and failing in that, perpetrating it with open violence, is but too characteristic of the manners of these fierce times, and of the treatment of slaves in all ages, ver. 15—22. But that which was designed to remove all hope of the escape of Israel from the house of their bondage, became in God's good time, the means of their deliverance.

There went a man of the house of Levi and took to wife a daughter of Levi. The son that God gave to them she hid in her house for three months, for she saw that he was a goodly child, and she could not bear the thought that he should be seized by Pharaoh's cruel task-masters, and cast into the river. Moreover, the love of the God of her fathers was in the heart of this woman, and His fear was before her eyes. It was His wisdom that pointed out to her the difficult path of her duty. It was His Spirit that strengthened her with strength in her soul to walk in it. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and

they were not afraid of the king's commandment," Heb. xi. 23. "And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes,—and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him," Exod. ii. 1—4.

The daughter of Pharaoh, providentially brought to the spot, had compassion on the forsaken infant whom she found among the flags: she gave wages to his mother to nurse him; she had him taught in all the wisdom and learning of the Egyptians: she brought him to her house, and would have adopted him for her son, ver. 5—10. But "by faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward," Heb. xi. 24—26. The riches, the honours, yea, the crown of Egypt, according to Josephus, were within his grasp. But God is now resolved to punish that guilty country; the cry of the oppression of His people has pierced his ears, and he is girding himself to avenge them. Four hundred years before, the faith of Joseph had lifted him out of the dungeon, and made him ruler over all the land of Egypt; but now, under the influence of the same grace, Moses "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king;" by faith, he endured a change of circumstances as sudden as that of Joseph, but as disastrous as his had been prosperous: he went forth for ever from the luxuries of the palaces of Egypt, to the hardships and dangers of the sheep-folds of the wilderness.

This discipline, so grievous to flesh and blood, he endured for forty years, "as seeing Him who is invisible," until God visibly present announced to him from the burning bush that the time to deliver His people, yea, the set time, was come; and that he was the prepared and chosen instrument whereby that deliverance was to be accomplished. God sometimes fulfils his purposes by what would seem to be strange contrarieties: it was through the wisdom and energy of Joseph that Israel went down into Egypt, and that Egypt was blessed for his sake; but it shall be by the faith and meekness of Moses that the mighty hand shall be revealed, and the stretched-out arm laid bare, whereby God shall lead his people forth from their prison-house and accomplish vengeance on their enemies, in the day that He heard their cry, and came down to deliver them.

God delights in the graces and gifts of his own Spirit in His people, and they are the means whereby the greatest of his works are often accomplished. But even in the use of them, he still teaches us that our God is a jealous God, who will not give his glory to another; and he will save through the energy of Joseph, and avenge through the meekness of Moses, in order that all men may perceive and understand, and know that He and He alone, is the Saviour and the Avenger.

Hitherto God hath taught us by the history of Egypt that blessed shall he be that blesseth his people, Numb. xxiv. 9; now shall all mankind know, by the history of the same country, that cursed is he that curseth them, and that whoso toucheth them "toucheth the apple of His eye," Zech. ii. 8.

It is not improbable that the Pharaoh, whose daughter had

brought up Moses, and would have adopted him, may have relaxed in some degree the severe laws of his ancestors against the Israelites. This may possibly be implied in the inspired narrative, which proceeds thus: "And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage," Exod. ii. 23. The cruel laws were probably again enforced by his successor in all their stringency.

But be this as it may, God's time for the performance of his works of providence and grace is always the right time. Forty years before, Israel was not ready for deliverance from Egypt. When Moses first "went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens," ver. 11, they were not disposed to hear the message which God, even then, was ready to declare to them by his lips, nor to fulfil the purpose that the faith, which is of the operation of God, was even then forming in his heart. He saw one of his brethren suffer wrong, and "he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not," Acts vii. 24, 25. But if his brethren were not yet ready to go forth out of Egypt, neither was Moses yet prepared to be their leader. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," James i. 20, even though that man be Moses, and even though the purpose in his heart be the deliverance of Israel. It is by the staff of Moses, not by his sword; it is by the meekness of Moses, not by his wrath, that God will work this great work on the earth. The Israelites themselves shall betray the rash act of Moses to their oppressors, and thus drive him forth into the

wilderness of Midian, and bind upon their own shoulders for forty years longer the heavy yoke of Egyptian bondage," Exod. ii. 11—22. But we shall find, that though He thus cast both into the furnace of affliction, yet, nevertheless, it was therein that he had chosen them, Isa. xlviii. 10.

The children of Israel "cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them," Exod. ii. 23—25. God also appeared unto Moses in the wilderness; and having made him willing to undertake the arduous office for which he had appointed him, he said unto him, "Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand," Exod. iv. 19, 20. Thus commanded of God, all his way was prepared before him. Aaron, his brother, is sent forth to meet him; he tells him all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. In fulfilment of the office of spokesman for his brother, which God had assigned to him, "Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses," and did the signs in the sight of the assembled elders of the children of Israel, "and the people believed," ver. 30, 31.

Before, the Israelites had slighted the message, and persecuted the messenger; before, Moses appears to have gone down in his own strength, probably supposing that he could save his brethren by his own sword, and by the strength of his own hand. But now he comes forth from the wilderness

leaning only on the God whom he loved, deeply diffident of his own ability, and strong only through faith in His power who had sent him. Israel likewise has been taught the lesson, which the God of their fathers had set them, in the hard school of Egyptian bondage. "And when the people heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped," ver. 31. It was good for both that they had been afflicted.

God will bring his people "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." In doing so, he will also punish Pharaoh and his subjects for the cruel bondage wherewith they had so long oppressed them. He "will work, and who shall let it?" Isa. xliii. 13. For this same purpose he raised up Pharaoh, that He might show his power in him, and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth, Rom. ix. 17. Pharaoh, regardless alike of the message from God wherewith Moses and Aaron came into his presence, and of the miracles which accredited their Divine mission, and by which his own enchanters were foiled and put to shame, hardened his heart; he refused to let the people go; he increased heavily their burdens. Then was it that the purpose of God became ripe for its accomplishment. Four hundred years before he had summoned the inhabitants of the earth to behold the marvels of his mercy in Egypt, now he will make her plagues wonderful also.

He "showed his signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. Their land brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of

their kings. He spake, and there came divers sorts of flies, and lice in all their coasts. He gave them hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land. He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts. He spake, and the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number, and did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground," Psa. cv. 27—35.

Already the spirit of the Egyptians was crushed beneath this accumulation of misery, and they called loudly unto Pharaoh that the command of the God who could perform such marvels should be obeyed. But the heart of the monarch was as the nether millstone, and he would not let the people go until the last unutterable woe had crowned the fearful climax of the plagues of Egypt. "And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead," Exod. xii. 29, 30. Then was it that the proud potentate of Egypt was prostrated in the dust, before the captives whom he had oppressed and despised, by the power of that God with whom he had so long contended. "And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of

the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men," ver. 31—33. Then was it also that God showed to the world that even the wealth after which the inhabitants thereof pine and grieve is in his hands and at his absolute disposal. Under the administration of Joseph, he had poured the silver and gold of the surrounding countries into Egypt as into his own treasure-house. But the Egyptians had misused this his gift; they had made it the means of oppressing his people who had so long dwelt in the midst of them; and therefore he will take it away from them, and in such a manner as shall demonstrate still more unanswerably his absolute sovereignty over all things. "And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians," ver. 35, 36. The children of Israel had undergone a cruel bondage in Egypt for upwards of 200 years; they had served as bond-slaves throughout the land. Probably they had been hired out for the service of private individuals as well as attached to the public works of the kingdom; the laws of that singular country enacting the same rigorous discipline over them in both conditions. Now they are about to depart and they shall receive at least some part of their wages. By the command of God, "they spoiled the Egyptians;" and herein God bore testimony to his own power and the inviolability of his own law regarding the right of possession, by making the Egyptians the willing instruments of their own despoiling.

One more blow must however be inflicted on Egypt, and

complete her prostration. "And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?—And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt.—And the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea," Ex. xiv. 5, 7—9. But Moses was at the head of the armies of Israel, and God was in the cloud that overshadowed them. "He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap," Psa. lxxviii. 13. "The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left," Exod. xiv. 29. The Egyptians pursued the children of Israel and entered the channel made in the deep at the Divine command, and "the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.—Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore," Exod. xiv. 28, 30.

"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was 430 years," Exod. xii. 40; and the consequences of this long sojourn in the house of their captivity (which was nevertheless the schoolmaster to bring them unto the law, even as the law was their schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ) will next require our attention.

When the children of Israel first migrated into Egypt,

that country had long enjoyed the blessing of a settled government, which was continued to it during the usurpation of the shepherd kings; who, framed, improved, and administered the excellent laws which seem to have existed in some form in Egypt from its first establishment as a monarchy, and the wisdom of which excited the admiration of the Greek authors many ages afterwards. Moreover, the Egyptians were a warlike race; well able to defend their own frontier; but, at the same time, not at all disposed to extend it by encroachments upon their neighbours, who, being almost without exception mere tribes of barbarians, they had little difficulty, nevertheless, in keeping in awe. Thus guarded by her laws from intestine tumults, and by her situation and the military prowess of her inhabitants from foreign invasion, the history of Egypt is marked by longer periods of internal tranquillity and prosperity than that of any other primitive kingdom; and the happy consequence of it was that early and rapid advance in all the useful and ornamental arts of social life, which made her the cradle of the civilization of the ancient world.

The Israelites dwelt in the midst of this most cultivated and industrious people for more than four hundred years; first as sojourners, afterwards as captives; it was there apparently that they acquired that knowledge of, and skill in the various arts of settled and civilized life, which prepared and fitted them afterwards for developing, to their full extent, the resources of the land of promise; arts which must necessarily have been unknown to wandering tribes of shepherds. This, doubtless, was one purpose of the Divine mercy which the captivity in Egypt was made to subserve.

All the celebrated nations of antiquity professed to have

derived their most useful inventions and discoveries from Egypt; but the civilization of the children of Israel seems to have been in a great measure Egyptian. Joseph, as we have seen, was an Egyptian in dress and manner; and the Scriptures inform us the same regarding Moses, who was taken for an Egyptian by the daughters of Jethro, Exod. ii. 19. We have noticed also the circumstance that the art of embalming the dead was practised by the Israelites, a custom peculiarly Egyptian. The jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, which were obtained by the Hebrews from the Egyptians would be of the make and fashion of Egypt; and we read of no change that was made in them afterwards on that account. In all particulars of dress and manners and customs they seem to have retained that which they had learned in Egypt, modifying and altering only to purify them from the idolatrous adjuncts which defiled every thing in that country.

Sympathy and inclination to mutual intercourse would be the inevitable consequence of this similarity of manners and customs between the two countries; and the Levitical law appears to have given something of a sanction to this intercourse. Egypt was not included in the stern prohibition wherewith it fenced in the Jews from all dealings, or interchange of any kind, with the idolaters around them. But, on the other hand, courtesy and hospitality to the Egyptians were enjoined upon the Israelite as a sacred duty, in requital of the benefits which his fathers had received in that country, Deut. xxiii. 7.

The history of Israel in their own land would seem to show that this command was very generally obeyed; and that the Jews continued, at all subsequent periods, their close

intercourse with the Egyptians. Solomon, the most magnificent and prosperous of the kings of Israel, married the daughter of the Pharaoh who, in his time, sat upon the throne of Egypt, 1 Kings iii. 1, and was assisted by him in the entire subjugation of the Canaanites that still dwelt in the land, 1 Kings ix. 15—17. When Solomon took to him wives of the daughters of other idolatrous kings, the Lord was angry with him, 1 Kings xi. 9; but we read of no rebuke in this case, which makes it not improbable that the Jews were allowed to intermarry with the Egyptians.

Egypt was also on this occasion the scourge in the hand of God wherewith he chastised the sin of Solomon and of the people. Hadad the Edomite, of the seed-royal of that kingdom, had been carried by his father's servants to Paran, in the borders of Egypt, during his infancy, when Edom was laid waste by David and Joab; afterwards they passed over into Egypt, where Hadad was hospitably received by Pharaoh, who "gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land." And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, Tahpenes the queen. Genubath, his son by this marriage, was in Pharaoh's household, among the sons of Pharaoh. When Hadad heard of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country, which, it would appear, was not granted, 1 Kings xi. 14—22. He was "an adversary unto Solomon," as the inspired narrative informs us, and probably organized in Egypt a powerful party against the house of David.

It was during the reign of Solomon that another of those changes of dynasty occurred, the frequency of which, in the

history of Egypt, has already been noticed. The reigning family to which Solomon had allied himself was dethroned, and a new race of Pharaohs arose from the city of Bubastis. The Greek authors have not recorded a single particular regarding this event: Hadad may possibly have been in some way connected with it, and thus have acted an important part in the histories of both countries. This would account for the transmission of his name to us in the inspired narrative.

The head of this new dynasty is named by the Greeks Sesonchis: he is the Shishak of Scripture, to whom Jeroboam the son of Nebat fled from the wrath of Solomon. It was late in the reign of the son of David; the Divine favour had departed from him, and the wisest of men was become a very fool, and would fight against God. He heard of the future greatness which the prophet Ahijah had foretold unto Jeroboam, and "Solomon sought therefore to kill him."

Men are often unwilling to acknowledge the extent of the Divine sovereignty over themselves, however readily they may admit the general truth of its existence; nor is there any subject upon which this unwillingness more frequently manifests itself than that of intellectual endowments. They justify themselves in pride in these things: they are apt to deem that they are, in some peculiar manner, their own. Let such look upon Solomon, who once "was wiser than all men," whose wisdom once "excelled the wisdom of all the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt," and the fame whereof "was in all nations round about," 1 Kings iv. 30, 31, now that his sin has provoked God to depart from him. And let the contemplation of the weak mad tyrant, seeking to wreak upon the hitherto unoffending instrument his anger against God, who will punish his iniquities, write indelibly upon their

hearts the salutary truth, that the Lord alone giveth the wisdom of which they boast; that out of his mouth alone cometh knowledge and understanding. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord," Jer. ix. 23, 24.

Jeroboam remained with Shishak until the death of Solomon. He then returned to Shechem, at the request of his countrymen, where all Israel was assembled, to invest Rehoboam with the crown of his father. There it was that the separation of Judah and Israel, and the choice of Jeroboam as their king by the latter people, fulfilled exactly the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Ahijah the prophet, 1 Kings xii.

It was in the fifth year of Rehoboam, that the first war took place which is recorded to have occurred between the Jews and Egyptians. "Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made," 1 Kings xiv. 25, 26: returning to Egypt with his booty, without attempting to retain possession of his conquest, according to the invariable practice of the Pharaohs.

This invasion was probably undertaken by Shishak as the ally of Jeroboam, whom he had so long entertained as a guest, and with whom he seems always to have cultivated friendly relations. Shishak would also be quite disposed to regard with a jealous eye the son of Solomon, who had

married a daughter of the family whose throne he had usurped.

The writings of the prophets inform us, that after this period the intercourse with Egypt was carried to a sinful excess by the people of both kingdoms. On their first departure from Egypt, they were warned against the idolatrous practices of that country, Lev. xviii. 3. But this warning they had always been prone to disregard. The terrible punishment which the golden calf in Horeb had brought upon his ancestors did not deter Jeroboam from instituting the worship of the same idol in Dan and Bethel. And in both instances the evil practice had evidently been learned in Egypt, which was notorious for the worship of animals.

Chariots and horses, which were forbidden in the land of Judea, Deut. xvii. 16; Isa. xxxi. 1, would seem also to have been introduced there by Solomon from Egypt, 1 Kings x. 26; see also Song of Sol. i. 9.

God grievously complains of his people, in after times, that they walked to go down to Egypt, but did not ask at his mouth; that they strengthened themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trusted in the shadow of Egypt, Isa. xxx. 1, 2, contrary to the directions which he had been pleased to give as to the course they ought to pursue. There was evidently a proneness to this unhallowed dependence upon Egypt at all periods of the Jewish history, and especially at the decline of the kingdom of Judah. The Jews who were left by the king of Babylon at Jerusalem, seem constantly to have cherished the hope of driving out their invaders by the help of the Egyptians, or of

finding a refuge in Egypt against their oppression. Zedekiah, who had been made king at Jerusalem in the place of Jehoiakin, rebelled against his master Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 20: and we find, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, that "he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people," Ezek. xvii. 11—15. This rebellion was quelled by a further invasion of the Holy Land by the Chaldeans, when Jerusalem was broken up. But notwithstanding the displeasure of God which had been declared, both by the mouth of his prophets and by the disastrous consequences that had already ensued, very shortly afterwards, the scattered remnant of the Jews that was still left by the conqueror in their own land, again looked to Egypt, and determined to flee thither, when Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made king, was slain by Ishmael, 2 Kings xxv. 25, 26. Though aware that this their proceeding was altogether opposed to the declared will of God, they nevertheless sought the Divine permission at the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah. This their hypocrisy called down upon themselves the heaviest denunciations of wrath, and a fearful curse upon their proposed journey: "The sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.—None of you shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon you.—And ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more." These were the circumstances under which Johanan the son of Kareah set forth on his melancholy journey to Egypt, dragging after him the men, the women, the children that were left, yea, and the

afflicted prophet himself, Jer. xlii. xliii. 1—7; soon afterwards to experience the literal fulfilment of the curse in its whole extent, when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt the second time, and put to the sword the whole of the Jews who had taken refuge there, without distinction of age or sex. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" Heb. x. 31.

This narrative illustrates the extent of the feeling of confidence in Egypt with which the Jews appear to have been possessed at all times, and against which the Lord their King so often expressed his fierce anger, both by the mouth of his prophets and the events of his providence. It was apparently to weaken this their confidence, that thirty years before, when he had decreed to take away Josiah, the best of their kings, from the evil to come, he sent him forth to fight with Pharaoh-nechoh at Megiddo, and there to perish in the flower of his age, leaving Jerusalem a prey to the conqueror, who laid it under a heavy tribute, 2 Kings xxiii. 29—35. But we have seen that these providential dealings and prophetic warnings availed nothing, and "God is not mocked." This sinful confidence in Egypt was assuredly one of the many concurrent causes which provoked the Lord to anger against his people, so that he sent them into captivity in Babylon. But he was also angry with Egypt for their sakes. Pharaoh-nechoh was expelled from Jerusalem four years afterwards by Nebuchadnezzar, and driven back with much loss into Egypt, which was in its turn invaded, Jer. xlvi. Pharaoh-hophra, his second successor, to whom Johanan had betaken himself, was shortly afterwards dethroned and strangled by Amasis, as the Lord had spoken, Jer. xliv. 30: and twelve

years later, he also fell a victim to the conqueror Cambyses the Persian, who devastated Egypt from the Mediterranean to the Cataracts, and reduced her from the rank of queen of the world's civilization to the basest of kingdoms, never again to rise to an independent nation, and to be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing their iniquity to remembrance, Ezek. xxix. 16, but to be a mere province first of Persia, then of the empire of Ptolemy, and lastly of Rome.

These calamities of Egypt were foretold by the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the course of our narrative has shown how exactly they received their accomplishment. But in the midst of these denunciations, the benefits which God's people had formerly received from Egypt, and the friendship which she afterwards manifested towards them, seem never to be forgotten by Him who in wrath remembers mercy. The prophetic doom that consigns other idolatrous nations to utter destruction frowns upon them as the blackness of darkness. But the "swift cloud" on which the Lord rideth when he cometh unto Egypt, Isa. xix. 1, is sometimes irradiated with a gleam of hope. The kings, and the armies of all the nations that were about to be overthrown, were entombed in one vast sepulchral cave, according to the bold figure of Ezekiel, chap. xxxii. There lay Asshur and all her company; there was Elam and all her multitude; there was Mesech, Tubal, and Edom, and the princes of the north, all of them and all the Zidonians. But though the command went forth to the multitude of Egypt also, "Go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised," ver. 19, yet it is likewise declared that in this his dreary dwelling

Pharaoh should see the desolation that was around him, and "be comforted over all his multitude, even Pharaoh and all his army slain by the sword, saith the Lord God," ver. 31. We may probably find the fulfilment of this sublime prophecy in the circumstance that the deep sufferings which now for more than 2000 years have overwhelmed Egypt have not extinguished her national identity and blotted her out from the face of the earth, the fate which has befallen all the other kingdoms which the prediction enumerates. Though the prey of every spoiler, though trampled to the very dust, she still remains Egypt, and still affords shelter to a miserable remnant that is descended from her ancient inhabitants.

There is also another passage in which God declares that he has purposes of mercy towards Egypt, Isa. xix. 18—25. But this prophecy is unfulfilled, and we forbear any attempt to lift the veil wherein He who spoke by the prophets has involved it. Let us rather rejoice with our whole heart in its general import, and earnestly pray for its speedy accomplishment; that as of old in the day of his wrath God was angry with Egypt for his people's sake, so in the coming day of his mercy he may for their sake also be gracious unto Egypt; and that she may be pre-eminently blessed when the showers of blessing that shall come down from the Lord upon his people in their own land shall overflow to the neighbouring nations, according to his word. "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance," Isa. xix. 24, 25.

On the return of the Jews from the captivity in Babylon, their intercourse and connexion with Egypt became even closer than before; though we do not find that they were then any longer tempted to imitate its idolatrous or sinful customs. This was especially the case when Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus, who had restored them to their own land, had conquered Egypt and thus brought both countries under one sceptre; and still more so after the overthrow of the Persian empire by Alexander the Great. Multitudes of Jews flocked to the magnificent city which he built at the mouth of the western branch of the Nile, and called after himself, Alexandria. It was in Egypt also under one of his successors, Ptolemy Epiphanes, about 204 years before Christ, that the first translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek was accomplished by the command of this monarch, who sent for translators from Jerusalem. He was highly favourable to the Jews, and seems to have done all in his power to encourage their settlement in Egypt. This version is still extant, and is generally called the Septuagint, or translation of the Seventy, from the fable which the Jews have invented that it was the work of seventy-two persons, six from each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Under the reign of Ptolemy Philometor, the son of Epiphanes, who also succeeded him, Onias, the son of Onias III., the high priest at Jerusalem, built a temple for the Jews in Egypt at Heliopolis, or Leontopolis; and instituted there the courses of priests and Levites, with the entire ceremonial of the law. He seems to have designed, by this rival temple to the one at Jerusalem, literally to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xix. 18. This circumstance sufficiently shows the number of Jews who at

that time, about 180 years before Christ, were settled in Egypt.

It was likewise in Egypt that the Jews first came in contact with the Greek philosophy. A sect arose among them at Alexandria called the Hellenising Jews, who debased the revelation that God had vouchsafed to them by mingling it with the vain imaginations of Plato. This school flourished during a long period; and unhappily its tenets were embraced by the Christians of Alexandria, early in the third century, and almost immediately upon the introduction of Christianity into that city.* Thus again did the Jews learn in Egypt an idolatry (polished and refined, it is true, but nevertheless an idolatry) which has perhaps done as much to impede the progress of divine truth in the hearts of men, and to provoke God's wrath against his church on earth, as even the grosser animal worship which their ancestors had also acquired there.

The close and intimate communication between the Israelites and Egyptians, well accounts and prepares the way for the last, but deeply interesting event, in which Egypt is connected with the inspired narrative. It is thus recorded in the New Testament:—"And when the wise men were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son," Matt. ii. 13—15. The Hope of all mankind is once

* See the "Life of Origen," published by the Religious Tract Society.

more in Egypt. Eighteen hundred years before, Egypt had received into her bosom, and preserved alive in the earth, that seed in which all the families thereof should be blessed. Now the promised blessing has come down from heaven: God is now manifest in the flesh; and it shall be out of Egypt that the world shall receive her Saviour; and again shall Egypt keep for awhile in safety the most precious jewel in the treasure-house of heaven.

In the days of old, Israel went forth from Egypt to inherit in the promised land the fulness of the temporal blessing wherewith God had blessed Abraham. Now out of Egypt will God call his Son, that the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ may be made manifest unto the whole world. In Adam all die, for all have sinned. Already dead in trespasses and sins, the grave waits to receive man's perishing body; and the still more fearful abyss of hell yawns for his immortal but polluted spirit. There is no escape for sinful man from these, the spiritual, temporal, and eternal consequences of his sin, but in that young child with whom his mother flees away from their enemies into Egypt.

Many dangers surround them; but amid the terrors of the wilderness, and among strangers in Egypt, the holy family is as safe as in the third heaven. For "out of Egypt" will God call his Son, to manifest him unto men, and in the fulness of time to deliver him into the hands of the wicked; to lay upon him the iniquity of us all. And, obedient to the call of Him whose will it was his meat to accomplish, he came as a lamb, without blemish and without spot, to take away the guilt and the power of Adam's sin in his posterity by the sacrifice of him-

self. He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheek to them that plucked off the hair; He hid not himself from any shame or ignominy that the malice of men could invent, and the wickedness of men could inflict upon him. To make atonement for the sin of man, His tender limbs were stretched and pierced with nails upon the accursed tree, where his body underwent all the extremities of torment; and, still more fearful, his pure and holy soul, which burned incessantly with the love of God, and which knew no motive but to do his Father's will, and finish his work, was racked at the same time with the agony which burst forth in the doleful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. xxvii. 46. All this he endured for six hours, and then the sacrifice was complete; the Divine justice was satisfied. And "he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost," John xix. 30. And now henceforth God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. iii. 26. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv. 12.

## CHAPTER II.

### CLIMATE AND MONUMENTS OF EGYPT.

EGYPT, whose history is thus closely interwoven with so much of the inspired narrative, is distinguished from all other countries by certain peculiarities of situation and of climate to which we have already alluded, and which we now proceed more fully to explain.

It lies between the parallels of latitude which are immediately to the north of the tropic of Cancer, and in both hemispheres and on every part of the earth's circumference, the countries so situated are remarkable for extreme drought and a consequent tendency to sterility. This is peculiarly the case with Egypt. It is a valley hemmed in by two ranges of mountains of no great elevation, extending from south to north, and flanked on three sides by deserts; on the east by the deserts of Arabia, interrupted only by the narrow gulf of the Red Sea; to the south and west by the Libyan desert, a vast expanse of sterile sand which stretches away southward into the very heart of Africa, and westward to the shores of the Atlantic. It is thus in the centre of the largest tract of uninterrupted desert on the surface of the earth; and, in consequence, rain is well nigh unknown in Egypt. In Upper Egypt, called also the Thebaid, rain was accounted a prodigy; and in the lists of the kings of Egypt

which were prepared by Manetho, a priest of Sibennytus, in Greek, by the command of Philadelphus, he has thought it worth recording that the year before the disastrous invasion of Darius Ochus there was rain in the Thebaid. The same peculiarity has also been noticed by modern travellers. Rain in that district excites astonishment and alarm amongst the inhabitants from the extreme infrequency of its occurrence.

The whole extent of the valley of Egypt is traversed by the magnificent river which is so intimately connected with its entire history, and so familiar to every one whose attention has been at all directed to that country, the Nile. The fertility of Egypt, yea its very existence otherwise than as a tract of desert, depends upon the phenomena connected with this river. The Nile ordinarily rolls a broad majestic stream of clear blue water to the sea, the pleasantness and salubrity of which as a beverage are acknowledged by all travellers, and praised by the inhabitants as far surpassing in excellence any other waters in the world; so much so, that the more opulent among them carry with them the waters of the Nile when they have occasion to visit other countries; and all ranks in Egypt regard the privation of the delicious draughts of their beloved river as one of the greatest hardships connected with absence from home. But regularly every year, about the time of the summer solstice, June 21, the waters of the Nile suddenly change their appearance and become red and turbid, so that in the course of a few hours its hitherto limpid stream seems to be turned into a river of blood. There is no atmospheric change in Egypt to account for this. The burning sun, the clear sky, and the dry atmosphere for which it is remarkable at all times, appear at this

season to prevail with more than usual intensity. After this phenomenon has continued for a few days, the waters gradually increase within the banks of the river. This increase proceeds with perfect regularity until about the middle of July, when they begin to overflow the banks; and by the 20th of the following month, Egypt presents the astonishing appearance of a vast sea, spotted over with villages and towns, and traversed in various directions by causeways which have been laid on mounds thrown up for the purpose of preserving the communication between them. The inundation continues increasing until the time of the autumnal equinox, when it begins as gradually to diminish; and before the end of November, the Nile has once more subsided within its banks, and again its clear blue waters sparkle in the burning sun of Egypt.

The industry and skill of the inhabitants have at all times been directed to the diffusion of these fertilizing waters over the greatest possible extent by means of canals and embankments; and these their efforts have been greatly assisted by the natural conformation of this most singular country. The surface of Egypt is convex; it rises gradually from the mountains that bound it to the east and west to the bed of the river, which runs like a deep furrow along the summit of the convexity; a circumstance of course highly favourable to the distribution of its waters during the inundation. Many of the ancient kings of Egypt were held in grateful remembrance by after ages on account of their efforts in the construction of lakes, canals, and mounds for this purpose; and there is a very distinct allusion to them in the prophecies of Isaiah, chap. xix. 5—7. We have already explained the entire dependence of the

fertility of Egypt on the inundation, and therefore sufficiently accounted for this anxiety in the wide diffusion of its waters, which communicate a fertility unparalleled elsewhere on the earth's surface to a country which without them would be a desert; the excessive dryness of the atmosphere and the all but total absence of rain excluding the possibility of vegetable life there; so that one and not the least of the marvels of Egypt is to see these two extremes of fertility and barrenness in contact with each other.

Another equally extraordinary effect of the extreme dryness of the atmosphere in Egypt demands our particular attention. Moisture, the great agent in decomposition, has been entirely abstracted from the atmosphere by the burning sands of the deserts, and consequently time, whose corroding tooth so rapidly destroys the works of men's hands in other countries, passes over the monuments of ancient days in Egypt almost without effecting any perceptible change in them. The paintings that cover the walls of temples which have been for the most part roofless for nearly 2000 years still remain undefaced; the colours are perceptible, and in certain cases they have even retained much of their original freshness. If such be the case with works of so fugitive and fragile a character as these, this perfect preservation will, of course, be still more conspicuous in the granite, basalt, and hard limestone of which the Egyptians made so free a use in their constructions. The sculptures and inscriptions on these substances seem to have undergone no change in the long period that has elapsed since many of them were sculptured; so that the fragments of temples which were levelled to the ground by Cambyses

500 years before the Christian era, have not yet lost the polish they possessed when they first issued from the artist's hands. Thus the combination of extreme freshness and extreme antiquity in its works of art is another of the marvels of Egypt. This is made very conspicuous when some accidental cause affords the opportunity of measuring, as it were, the period that has really elapsed since their execution. The obelisk that is still erect among the ruins of Alexandria retains much of the freshness, sharpness, and high polish of its first execution on its north and east faces: but the minute particles of sand with which the air is charged in passing over the desert have entirely defaced its south and west sides by beating against it during the 1600 years in which it has stood in its present position; for probably about that time it was removed to Alexandria from some other city where it had been originally erected.

The same anomaly is even more observable in the excavations in the sides of the mountains, whereby the Egyptians have perpetuated the proofs of their skill and industry. On first surveying the immense cavern temple at Ipsambul in Nubia, the spectator might well imagine that the artists were still at work in it. It is impossible that the white of the walls can at any time have been purer or more perfect, the outlines of the figures sharper, or the colours more brilliant than now; and this impression is strengthened when he comes to that part of it where the tracings and first outlines show that this great work was never finished. But the black dust that, to the depth of many inches, covers the rocky floor on which he treads, and into which the doors, the door-posts, and internal

fittings of the temple have long since corroded and mouldered, soon convinces him of his mistake, by showing him demonstrably how many ages have rolled away since the hands by which these wonders were accomplished have been motionless in the grave.

This congeniality of the climate of Egypt to the perpetuation of works of art has preserved them to our times in numbers which are truly astonishing, when we take into account the disastrous history of the downfall of that ancient monarchy, the invasions, the civil wars, and the successive conquests by which her original population was well nigh annihilated; and still more when we consider that for the last 1600 years they have been entirely neglected by the inhabitants, and left in great measure to dilapidation and ruin.

These remains of the departed greatness of Egypt consist generally of places for religious worship and ceremonies and for civil assemblies. The site of almost every city of note in Upper or Southern Egypt is marked by the ruins of a temple, or palace-temple, which was at once the residence of the monarch and the place where the solemn religious and civil assemblies of the chief estates in Egypt were held. These ruins are covered with reliefs, generally coloured, and representing the idols to which they had been dedicated receiving the homage of the kings by whom they had been founded; and also the battles, sieges, and other events of the wars, out of the spoils of which these acts of munificence were performed. These pictures often cover a vast extent of wall, and are crowded with figures in action, executed with much spirit and fidelity; the costume and the peculiarities of feature and colour of the inhabitants of the different nations being strictly preserved. In a third class

of designs, the king of Egypt is represented as a returned conqueror marching in triumph to the temple, dragging long lines of captives of different nations to the feet of the divinity to which it is dedicated. All these reliefs are accompanied by explanatory inscriptions in the hieroglyphic or sacred characters of Egypt. The mode of reading these characters has been recently so far recovered as to enable us to ascertain that they embody exactly the information that was wanted to make the pictures they accompany available for the elucidation of the religion and history of Egypt. They give us the names of the gods represented, the ceremonies to be observed in their worship, their genealogies, and other mythological particulars. The pictures of kings have also invariably their names written over them; and this is also the case with the foreigners with whom they were at war, with the towns and fortresses they were besieging, and with the captives that were led bound in the triumphal processions. The dates of the erection of the temples and of the occurrence of the wars, have also been preserved. They are computed by the years and months of the monarch's reign, in exactly the same manner as in the books of Kings in the Old Testament.

In some instances, these temples are excavations hewn in the face of the rock, like that at Ipsambul in Nubia, which has just been mentioned.

Portions of these ruins, consisting of statues of gods, kings, and sphinxes, of obelisks, and of fragments of columns, friezes, etc., have also been removed from Egypt in great numbers, and transferred to the different museums of Europe. These have likewise hieroglyphic inscriptions

engraved upon them, which, in some instances, are important as historical documents.

The tombs of Egypt have also furnished in abundance the monuments of her ancient greatness. In Upper Egypt the dead were deposited in immense caverns hollowed in the rocky mountains that form the western boundary of the valley of the Nile. In Lower Egypt, where the mountains disappear, deep pits were dug and lined with bricks or hewn in the rock for this purpose. These sepulchral caverns would seem to demonstrate the literal truth of the remark of Diodorus Siculus respecting this extraordinary people, that they spent more upon their tombs than upon their houses. Some of these are common cemeteries of vast extent in which the mummies or embalmed bodies of the poorer classes (sometimes in coffins, but generally with no other receptacle than the thick swathing of linen in which they were always enveloped) are piled with great care and regularity, and in incredible numbers. Others are family vaults, which have been prepared expressly for individuals and their connexions, belonging to the wealthy and privileged orders of the priesthood and the military. These also are very extensive in some cases; consisting of a succession of chambers with galleries leading to them, having the walls every where stuccoed and covered with paintings representing scenes partly relating to the funeral, or to their mythological belief regarding death, but principally to the operations of common life. The deceased is represented surrounded by his family, banqueting, listening to music, observing the evolutions of dancing girls, or the feats of activity and dexterity of tumblers and jugglers. Then

again he is in the open country, amusing himself with hunting, fowling, or fishing. In another place, he is in the fields, superintending the various operations of agriculture, or taking the account of his herds and flocks. The tombs of other individuals have preserved the representations of various processes in the mechanical arts. The making of wine, weaving, tanning, and other similar arts are all in actual progress. Masons, brickmakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc., are hard at work. The forging of arms, the building of chariots and ships, the arts of sculpture and painting, are depicted with every appearance of minute fidelity. There is scarcely an art of common life which is not represented in the tombs; all these representations being accompanied by explanatory inscriptions in hieroglyphics. The artist seems to have had the design of banishing, as far as possible, the idea of death from the tomb, for every thing in it savours of life except the corpse. It was the custom of the Egyptians to prepare and decorate their tombs during their lifetime, and this fact affords us the only explanation which can be given of so singular an anomaly.

The contents of these tombs are also of a character equally interesting and important. The mummies are sometimes enclosed in sarcophagi, or stone coffins, made of granite, basalt or alabaster, and covered with figures and hieroglyphic inscriptions engraved in intaglio, that is, hollow like the cutting of a seal. But one wooden case, or several fitting within each other, and superbly decorated with painting or gilding, are more frequently the receptacles of the mummies found in these splendid tombs.

These are by no means the most valuable part of their contents. It would seem to have been a custom with the

Egyptians to deposit with their dead the tools or utensils of which they had made use when living, or any articles of luxury upon which they had set a particular value. Such objects are of very frequent occurrence in the tombs. Elegantly shaped vases of granite, alabaster, metal, and earth abound in all great collections of Egyptian antiquities; of which the annexed engravings are specimens. The mason's and carpenter's tools in brass or iron; the chairs, tables, couches, and wooden pillows; the pallets used by the sacred scribes, with the colours in cakes and the reeds or brushes; the models of boats, houses, and granaries—which give so much interest to these collections, and with which the British Museum is so richly supplied, have all been taken from the tombs. Books in the ancient form of rolls are also not unfrequently discovered; and, when their contents are well understood, they will probably form the most valuable part of these remains. They are generally found in the swathings of mummies, sometimes, also, enclosed in hollow figures of wood, or earthen jars. They are written upon a substance called papyrus or byblus, which is made from the inner coat of a species of reed, once very common in the canals and lakes of Egypt. There is a large collection of these papyrus rolls in the British Museum.

The tombs of the kings which were excavated in Biban-el-Malook, a secluded valley to the west of Thebes, far surpass those of private individuals in the magnificence of their decorations. The study of their paintings and inscriptions has already made some valuable additions to our knowledge of the history and arts of ancient Egypt. Sixteen of these tombs are now known, all of which have been long ago pillaged of their contents.

Religious Tract Society, 56, Paternoster Row, 1841.

Thus, from the very peculiar nature both of the customs of Egypt and of its climate, we know more of the minute details of common life amongst its ancient inhabitants than perhaps of any other nation of antiquity. These remains have also furnished the materials whence its history (our knowledge of which was before derived only from a confused collection of fragments handed down to us by the Greek authors) has been already greatly elucidated, and will probably before long be to a considerable degree restored.

We have already seen that Egypt has, on many past occasions, greatly subserved the purposes of the Divine mercy; and there is a certain uniformity in the Divine dealings which justifies the expectation that the same instrumentality will generally be employed for the accomplishment of the same end; and, therefore, that on future occasions Egypt may powerfully aid the cause of the gospel. This consideration is of itself enough to excite the attention of the Christian to all that relates to that country; nor can he hear without deep interest that a vast mass of facts has been providentially preserved to us concerning the manners, customs, and arts of common life of its ancient inhabitants, from whom God's chosen people derived their civilization, and whose history for full 2000 years runs closely parallel with that of Israel. For it is no presumptuous interpretation of the purpose of God in his providence, to observe that an inquiring, searching spirit, demanding the proof of every thing, predominates in the minds of men at the present day, and from thence to infer the importance of this opening of a new and hitherto unexplored field of inquiry, and the value of the powerful array of

unanswerable evidence in favour of the Scriptures, which doubtless will be obtained from it. These and similar considerations encourage the hope that the philosophy of this age will be the instrument in God's hands wherewith he will oppose its infidelity.

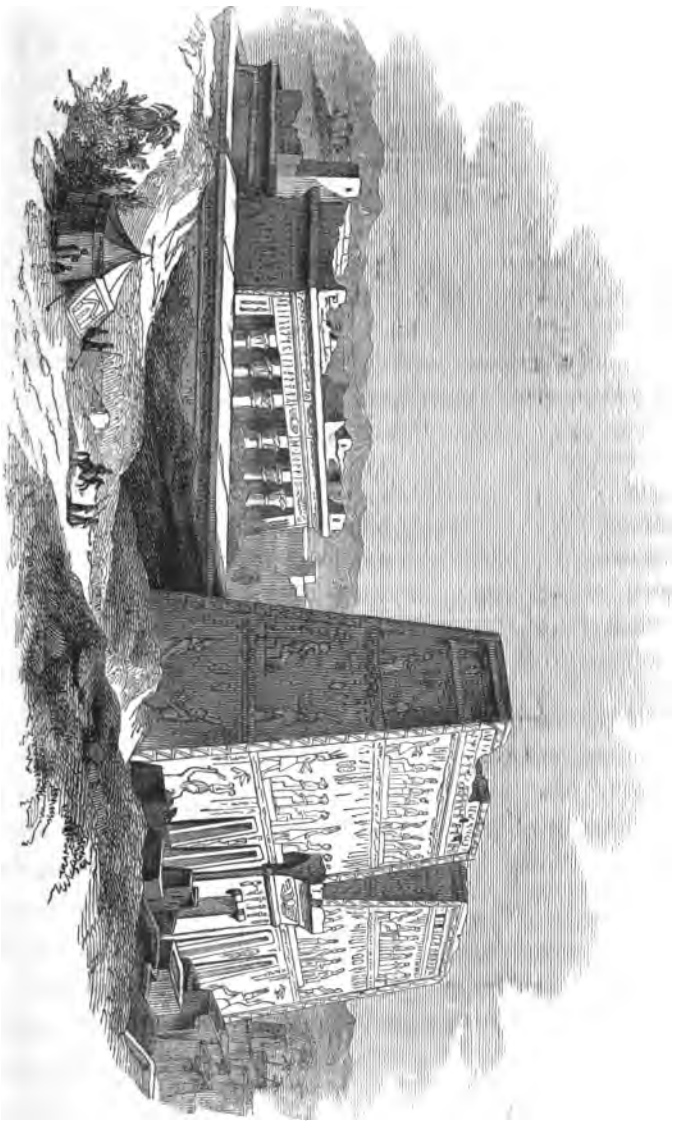
## CHAPTER III.

### THE ARTS OF DESIGN AMONG THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

WHEN the children of Israel were finally delivered from all further apprehension of the pursuit of their task-masters, and were assembled at the foot of Mount Sinai to hear from Moses the commandments of the Lord, who had wrought this great deliverance for them, we find that they had made great progress in the arts of civilized life. The construction of the tabernacle, which was to be commenced immediately, taxed the ingenuity, the skill, and the taste of the people, as well as their contributions. Bezaleel, of the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan, are distinguished by name as having been especially gifted by God with the talent which enabled them to excel "in all manner of workmanship: to devise cunning works, to work in gold, in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship;" and, as if entirely to exclude boasting from the sons of men on all subjects, it is declared that they thus excelled because they were filled with the Spirit of God, Exod. xxxi. 1—7. The arts of spinning, weaving, and dyeing, of working in wood, of casting and burnishing metals, and of polishing precious stones, were all called into

operation. Nor did it comport with the Divine wisdom to confine his requisition upon the skill of his people to the mere drudgery of human art. God will have man to serve him with the best powers that he has given. His sanctuary in the midst of them shall be for "glory and for beauty" as well as for utility. Embroidery, sculpture, engraving, art in the most exalted sense of the word, shall also be employed upon it; and it was in these rare and peculiar gifts that Bezaleel and Aholiab probably excelled.

Not only were the Divine communications granted, but the Israelites would avail themselves of the knowledge acquired during their long sojourn among the Egyptians, whose existing monuments show them to have attained a high degree of perfection, and who especially applied the art of design with a profusion unknown perhaps in any other country. Their temples appear to have been crowded with statues, and the walls covered with figures in relief and with hieroglyphic inscriptions. This was the case with the obelisks, the two colossi, and the propyla or truncated pyramids that stood on either side of the entrance to the temple. The gate-posts and lintels were in the same manner covered with devices, and so also were the whole exterior and interior of the sacred edifice, and every pillar, both within and without it, from the floor to the roof and from the gateway to the sanctuary. Gigantic figures in relief, with long columns of inscription in hieroglyphics, meet the eye everywhere. The tombs also were decorated and inscribed in the same manner; and even the smaller objects, which admit of removal, and which have therefore been transferred to the museums of Europe, present the same extraordinary profusion of figures in relief and hieroglyphic



General view of the great Temple at Edfou.

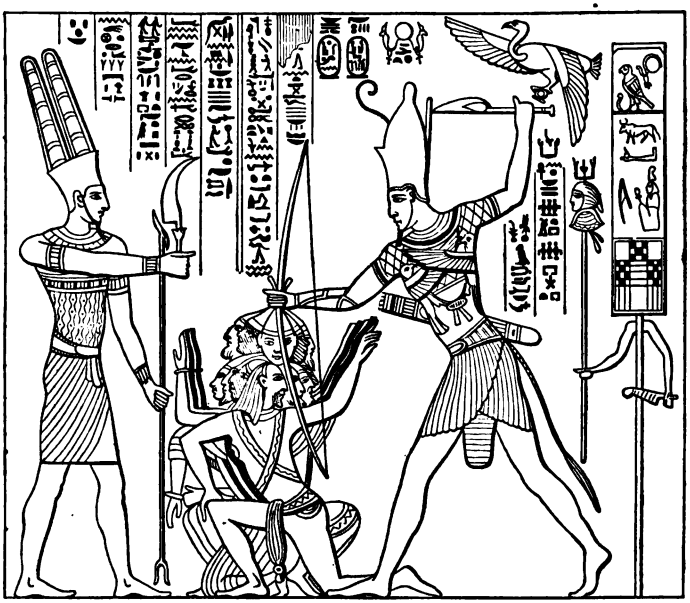
inscriptions. They abound not only on sarcophagi, mummy cases, and other similar remains, where we naturally expect to find them, but also on earthen cups, brazen vessels, boxes, articles of domestic furniture, etc., as to which the motive for inscribing them is much more difficult of comprehension; yet groups of figures, with long accompanying explanations in hieroglyphics, frequently occur even on these objects.

It is also needful to explain, (in order to convey a correct impression of the extent to which the art of design was applied in ancient Egypt,) that the characters which compose this their system of writing are all the pictorial representations of the heavenly bodies, men, animals, birds, articles of dress, furniture, and other physical objects.

The purpose of the Egyptians in their use of the art of design was very different to that of the Greeks, from whom modern art has been altogether derived. It was not to excite the imagination, but to inform the understanding; not to give pleasure, but to convey facts, that painting and sculpture were employed in Egypt. According to Clement of Alexandria, an Egyptian temple was γράμμα, "a writing;" it addressed itself to the mind in the same manner as a book. And, to proceed with the metaphor, the groups of figures which covered it with their hieroglyphic explanations were the several chapters or sections of which the book was composed. So that it was designed to be a written record of the historical facts which led to its erection, and of the Mythic fables, in conformity to which it was dedicated.

It will usefully illustrate the extent to which this mode of speaking of an Egyptian temple was literal rather than metaphorical, if we give here some account of the devices which were engraved at the entrance, generally on the

propyla, which are two truncated pyramids placed on either side of the gateway. On each of these was designed a gigantic figure of the Pharaoh by whom the temple was built, grasping with his left hand the hair of one or more captives who are kneeling before him, and brandishing a sword or club in his right hand. These captives represent the nations who were conquered in the war, the events of which are detailed on the walls in the interior of the temple, and whose spoils had contributed to its erection, having been consecrated to that use by the conqueror. So that these designs really answer the purpose both of title pages and tables of contents. We subjoin an example, which is the title page to the cave at Ipsambul.



The four lines immediately above the hero in the act of striking, the second of which is somewhat defaced at the

top, read—"The living good god, the glorious guardian, smiting the south country," (that is, Africa,) "treading down the north country," (that is, Asia; some of the captives he is smiting have the features and complexions of Africans, others of Asiatics: the walls of the temple itself are covered with an immense scene, representing his campaigns in both these continents,) "the victorious king cometh smiting with the sword the boundaries of all the nations of the world." Then follow the names of the hero, "The lord of the world (sun, guardian of justice approved of the sun, Sesostris.) The lord of Egypt, (Ramses, beloved of Amon.") Immediately above his head is Harn-hat, the celestial sun, the symbol of sovereignty. The vulture holding a ring in its claws is the symbol of victory. The two columns immediately under his arm read, "King of an obedient people, the righteous Horus, lord of the sword. Devoted to Seben, (the goddess of victory, the vulture,) living lord of the world, who is in this cave, his glorious habitation." On the left is the god Amon, to whom the cave is dedicated, holding out a sword to Sesostris. Over him is written, "Thus saith Amon-ra, the lord of the thrones of the world, Take thy sword, smite with it; we have given thee to tranquillize the south country, Africa; to conquer the north country, to trample under foot all the evil races of the world; to multiply thy great halls beyond the boundaries of Egypt." Ipsambul is not in Egypt proper. The last phrase is obscure.

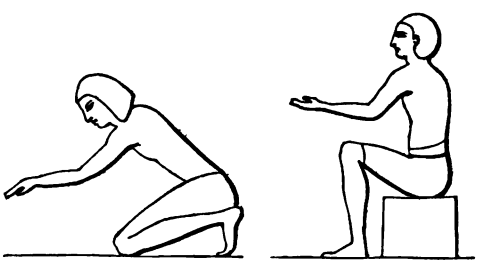
The paintings in the tombs have also the same design. They represent supposed facts; the events of the life of the deceased, or the adventures of his soul after death. Clearness of idea, therefore, not pictorial effect, was the primary object of art in Egypt.

The state of the arts of design among the Egyptians was entirely modified by this circumstance. Their artists made their imitations of nature sufficiently close to convey the intended idea with clearness and precision; and when that was attained, they had no motive for attempting any further improvement. It is the different degrees of accuracy which different objects require, in order that the picture may convey a clear and unequivocal idea to the mind, that doubtless has produced the singular unevenness (so to speak) which characterizes the remains of Egyptian art. For example: but little pains is generally taken with the human figure; its details are given imperfectly and incorrectly. And for an obvious reason. A very rude sketch will suffice to convey the idea, so that mistake shall be impossible; and that was generally all the artist wanted. But, in the same column or group with these ill drawn figures, the birds are often executed with a fidelity and spirit which can only be attained by the careful study of nature, and which could hardly be surpassed even by modern artists; and the reason is equally obvious. All this accuracy is required in order to the clear specification of the bird intended. Instances, moreover, are not wanting of Egyptian statues in which the details of the human form are more carefully attended to; and the Egyptians evidently excelled in the art of taking portraits, which was one of their modes of specifying the individual man or woman they intended to represent. The features of several of the Pharaohs are well known and easily recognized wherever they occur. So that it was not from any defect in the national taste or capacity that the productions of art in Egypt are inferior to those of Greece, but because of the very different pur-

poses for which the arts were cultivated in the two countries.

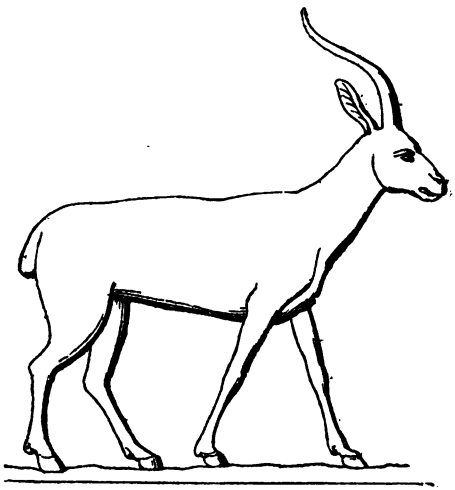
As exactitude rather than effect has generally been the primary object of the Egyptian artists, and as they stopped short even of this when their designs were sufficiently accurate to convey the idea intended, another peculiarity appears in their productions. They were entirely unacquainted with the arts of perspective in drawing, and of the application of light and shade in colouring; they evidently did not feel the necessity of acquiring them, as their designs were conventionally understood without such assistance. Much distortion, both in drawing their figures and in arranging them, has arisen from these defects, which render Egyptian paintings and reliefs exceedingly difficult of comprehension to a modern and unpractised eye. A brief account of some of the more remarkable of these peculiarities may not be unacceptable.

The human face is almost always designed in profile both on flat surfaces and in reliefs, but, with the exception of the nose it is really half the full face. The figure which accompanies this face is also distorted; the body is represented in front, the legs and feet in profile. In the very few instances where a side view of the whole was intended,



but one arm and one foot are visible and seem to be all of

which the figure is possessed, because there is no attempt to foreshorten. For the same reason, goats or antelopes are often depicted with one horn only, and in these representations the fable of the unicorn probably originated.



From the tomb of Petamenoph at Thebes.

Regular solid figures would evidently present formidable difficulties to artists who knew nothing either of perspective or of light and shade, and their designs of them are extremely difficult of comprehension. It was only after long familiarity that the Egyptian representations of troughs, blocks, tools, household furniture, and similar objects, were understood by those who have recently devoted themselves to the study of these antiquities. The pictures of houses, gardens, and granaries are still nearly unintelligible, though every detail is drawn with the minutest accuracy. A full elucidation of them would be highly interesting and important. In large pictures or groups, figures on the same plane are denoted by being placed one above the other.

The annexed plate is the representation of a granary.

This device is of not infrequent occurrence in the tombs of Egypt. The stooping figure to the right is filling his measure from a heap of grain, in order to put it into the sack of the next man, who is holding it open for the purpose. Three Egyptians are carrying full sacks up the stairs, and the next at the top empties his sack into the aperture of the *matadore*, or vault, in which it was deposited. The superintendent, or steward of the personage who was buried in the tomb, holds his symbol of office in one hand, and with the other indicates the number of measures poured into the vault. The whole quantity which the vault is capable of containing is inscribed on the wall above the window, but has been too much defaced to be legible. The window was for the purpose of admitting air to the corn, without which it soon becomes mouldy. This granary was probably a low flat-roofed building. Immediately at the entrance was a room, or warehouse, in which the corn was received from the threshing-floor. A flight of steps conducted to a chamber over the vaults, which were seven in number, and in two tiers on the same plane. The upper one of three vaults is that furthest from the eye. So little regard had the Egyptians to perspective, that the artist has depicted the opposite wall above, for the purpose of giving the number of measures of grain deposited in the granary. The semi-circular roof in the middle was for architectural effect; probably it faced some public way.

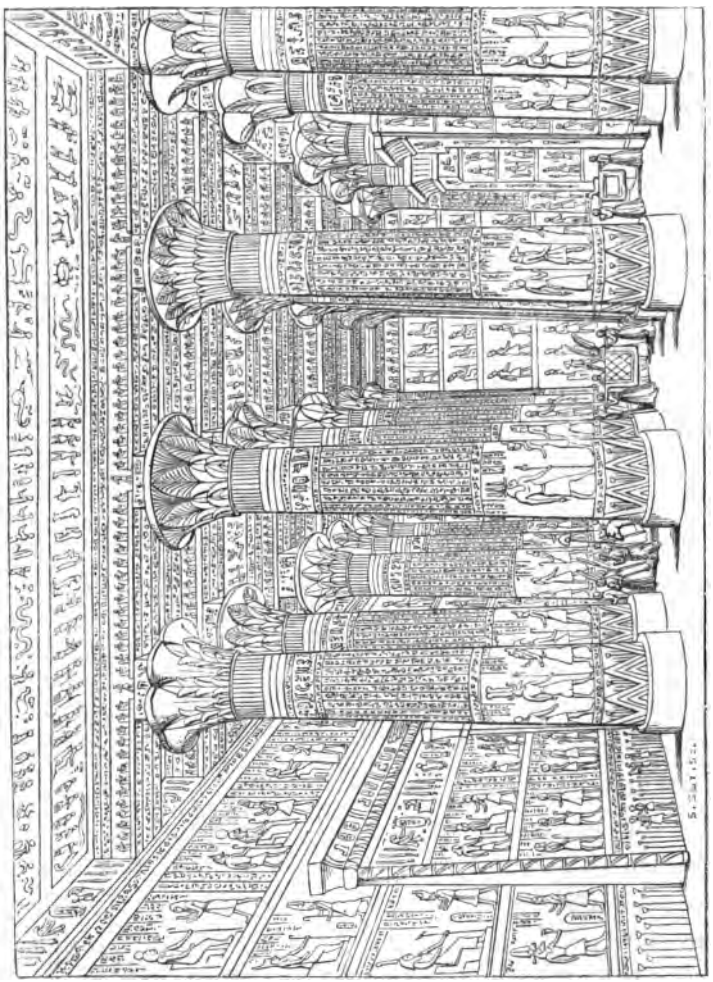
These remarks may, perhaps, afford some help in comprehending the meaning of the pictures which cover the monuments of Egypt.

But though thus indifferent to picturesque effect in the details of their designs, the Egyptians knew how to obtain

it in a very high degree in the arrangement and harmony of the whole, of which they formed a part. The effect of the immense coloured reliefs which cover the walls of some of the caves and temples is said far to surpass that of the most celebrated efforts of Grecian art, notwithstanding the uncouthness and clumsiness of the details.

The impression upon the mind of the spectator when he first enters one of the vast halls which still remain in the interior of the palaces at Thebes, is described to be absolutely stunning. Some of these halls are 600 feet both in length and breadth, and are crowded throughout their entire area with massive columns 12 feet in diameter and 66 feet high. The walls, pillars, and gateways are all covered with colossal figures in relief of gods and kings, and with the representation of long triumphal and religious processions. These designs are also painted with the most vivid colours, which are applied every where with very skilful attention to general harmony of effect. It may readily be imagined that the sensations excited by the contemplation of a scene so wonderful and so strange are as difficult for one who has seen it to describe as for one who has not seen it to conceive.

Those who have visited Egypt also praise greatly the architectural effect of those temples the exterior of which remains entire, or nearly so. They speak of the air of solemn magnificence which is presented by these majestic ruins, in this respect, also, giving them a decided preference to the Grecian temples, and enlarging upon the singular propriety of this style of architecture for the construction of an edifice set apart for religious purposes.



Interior of the great Temple at Esne.

## CHAPTER IV.

### RECOVERY OF THE MODE OF READING HIEROGLYPHICS.

It has already been shown, that the devices and inscriptions on the temples and tombs of Egypt are historical documents, which, if understood, would most probably furnish highly important illustrations of the text of holy Scripture. And, therefore, it will be heard with deep interest that, in the course of the last twenty years, the scholars of Europe have made great progress in deciphering these inscriptions. Some account of the discovery of the mode of reading them will be desirable.

Many obelisks, and other works of art, still remain at Rome, which had been brought thither from Egypt by the emperors, most of which are covered with hieroglyphics. The meaning of these singular characters had been often under discussion among men of letters from almost the revival of learning in Europe in the fifteenth century. The Roman, and still more the Greek authors of antiquity, had written much upon them without knowing much about them, by no means an unusual case; and, upon their authority, it was believed, that very profound and important knowledge lay hid beneath these strange uncouth symbols; and that the discovery of the key to them would unlock to the world a

treasury of hidden and forgotten truths, both physical and metaphysical.* From the same source, the moderns derived something like the hope that industry and critical skill would accomplish this discovery. A work was known to them written by Horapollo, and professing to have been translated into Greek from the ancient Egyptian, which gave the interpretations of several groups of hieroglyphics; and in other classical authors, also, similar interpretations were occasionally to be found. But it was not in consequence of any encouragement afforded them by these ancient authorities that the moderns persevered in their laborious researches. The account of the classic writers rather led to the conclusion that the interpretation of hieroglyphics had been so studiously concealed from the vulgar by the priests of Egypt, and was so imperfectly known, even among themselves, that it was wholly lost or forgotten in the days of the later emperors, one of whom had offered in vain a large reward to any one who should read for him the inscription on an obelisk he was about to erect.

The first author among the moderns who seriously undertook the interpretation of hieroglyphics was A. Kircher. He was a man of great industry and stupendous learning. His work, which he entitled Œdipus Ægyptiacus, appeared in six bulky folios, in 1636, and gave professed interpretations of the hieroglyphics on most of the Egyptian monuments then in Europe. Respecting these interpretations, it may suffice to remark, that they all treated of mysterious and recondite subjects, such as the soul of the world, the spirit of

* This notion began about 600, A.C., in the reign of Psammetichus: it was afterwards revived by the Gnostic heretics, in the third century of the Christian era. See Zœga de Obeliscis, pp. 542. 549.

nature, etc., and the sense was equally good whether the reading commenced at the beginning of the inscription or at the end; nay, they were deemed so pregnant of meaning, that a consistent and profound sense might be obtained by beginning in the middle.

Kircher, however, eminently assisted the researches that ultimately proved successful, by bringing together in his book a voluminous collection of passages from the Greek and Latin authors regarding Egypt. And still more by calling the attention of the learned to the Coptic tongue, in which a vast number of MSS. were collected in the Vatican and other public and private libraries in Italy. The Coptic, as its name imports,* is the language of ancient Egypt, written in Greek characters, for the use of the early Christians in that country. The whole Bible is extant in it, as well as very voluminous collections of liturgies, legends, and other ecclesiastical documents.

Kircher had many able successors; and before the termination of the last century all that could be gathered from the classics regarding Egypt was to be found in the voluminous works of Jablonsky, Zœga, and others: while the labours of Wilkins, Woide, Tuki, Quatremere, and others, had very considerably extended our knowledge of Coptic, and demonstrated its identity with the ancient Egyptian, which had, strangely enough, been questioned at the beginning of the century.

These researches led to the discovery of the mode of reading the hieroglyphics. They may be adduced to show that an honest and sincere inquiry after truth is never ultimately in vain, and also for the encouragement of those

* It is an Arabian corruption of the Greek word Αἴγυπτος, Egypt.

whose opportunities and mental powers enable them to give long and undivided attention to abstruse and uninviting subjects in literature or science; such researches, well directed and steadily pursued, are always beneficial. The students who prosecute such inquiries may not themselves make important discoveries; but they will scarcely fail to clear the way to them.

An entirely new direction was given to these researches into the antiquities of Egypt by the memorable expedition of the French to that country in 1798. It was accompanied by a number of persons eminent in the various departments of science and literature, who were sent by the government for the purpose of research in a field then all but unknown; and it was especially to the monuments of antiquity that their attention was to be directed. For this purpose they were assisted by engineers and draftsmen, and supplied with every other facility. The reports sent home by this body of savans of the wonders that surrounded them, the monuments that were sent to France, and the accounts which some of them published of their personal adventures, did not fail to arouse the public attention to the subject throughout Europe. This was still more excited when, at the termination of the expedition, the museums of London and Paris were furnished with antiquities exhibiting remains that displayed a degree of advancement in the arts which had not before been suspected.

Among the monuments thus obtained, that which excited the greatest interest, and the liveliest hopes of ultimate success, was a huge block of black basalt, which had been found by the French army, in digging the foundation of Fort St. Julian, near Rosetta. This monument

was afterwards taken by the English fleet, and deposited in the British Museum, where it has long been familiar to the public under the name of the Rosetta stone. It bears three inscriptions. The upper one is in hieroglyphics much mutilated; the second is in the character called in the inscription itself enchorial, or writing of the country; the third is in Greek, and professes to be a translation of the hieroglyphics.

The Greek inscription on the Rosetta stone engaged the attention of scholars of no less note than Professor Porson here, and Dr. Heyne in Germany, almost immediately on its arrival. By their critical labours, certain blanks occasioned by fractures in the stone were supplied, and the purport of the whole was fully and satisfactorily ascertained. It is a decree of the priests of Egypt, conferring divine honours and worship upon Ptolemy Epiphanes, the fourth successor of Lagus or Soter, the Macedonian general, to whom Egypt was assigned in the partition of the empire of Alexander the Great.

The continental scholars, at the same time, were devoting themselves with equal zeal to the study of the two Egyptian inscriptions, and with success on one very important point in the inquiry. They succeeded in demonstrating that the Greek was really a translation, and consequently that the ancients were mistaken in their opinion, that the interpretation of these characters had been forgotten and lost at the conquest of Cambyses. Mr. Akerblad pointed out the following hieroglyphic passage, which corresponded with a place in the Greek, where "temples of the first, second, and third orders" are mentioned; while the Baron Sylvestre de Sacy had ascertained satisfactorily in the second

inscription, the groups of enchorial characters that represented certain Greek words, such as Alexander, and Ptolemy,  The same inscription was also taken up by Akerblad, with results still more satisfactory as to its identity with the Greek.

Shortly afterwards (1814) an important work appeared written by M. Champollion le jeune, a young Frenchman, whose ardour and enthusiasm in the subject were sufficiently evinced by the preface, which announced that the author had devoted his life entirely to the study of Egyptian antiquities. It was entitled, "L'Egypte sous les Pharaons," and is a profoundly learned collection of the geographical notices which occur in the Coptic MSS., collated with those of ancient and modern authors on the same subject. The research and ingenuity which it exhibited were astonishing, and it afforded a strong evidence of the competency of its author to the task he had undertaken.

Among the monuments which had especially attracted the attention of the French savans, there were none upon which more controversy arose than the zodiacs which are sculptured upon the roofs of the temples of Dendara and Esneh, in Upper Egypt. These monuments were asserted by some authors, both here and on the continent, to be of extraordinary antiquity. M. Jomard made the date of one of them at least 1923 years before the Christian era, and as a medium, assigned 3000 years as the most probable period during which they had existed, on the occurrence of that event. M. Dupuis made the zodiacs 4000 years old at the very least: while M. Gori would not abate a week of 17,000 years. All these writers founded their reasonings upon the signs with which the zodiacs commenced, and which they concluded to

denote the time of the vernal equinox. As the place of the equinox in the zodiac precedes, that is, moves in a contrary direction to the order of the signs, and as its rate of progress had been calculated, they endeavoured, by a back reckoning, to arrive at the period when the 21st of March was in the lion, as in the zodiac of Dendara, and in the virgin, as in that of Esneh. The strange discrepancy of the results they obtained, sufficiently shows the worthlessness of the mode of proof they had adopted.

All these calculations were in an especial manner directed either expressly or implicitly against the Mosaic chronology, which they affected to consider as completely exploded. For the whole subject was then exactly in the state in which the infidel, like every other upholder of that which is not true, would have it to be—facts were wanting, conjectures were abundant. A great deal of amusing hearsay extracted from the Greek authors who were never very precise in the information they acquired in foreign nations, and vast numbers of monuments covered with sculpture and inscriptions; but of the import of these inscriptions, absolutely nothing was known. A single character only, the crux ansata, or cross with a handle, ☥ was supposed, by a kind of tradition, to be the symbol of life. It was in this thick darkness that these infidels rejoiced, as, like birds of the night, hovering over or perching upon the uncouth remains of ancient superstition, they filled the air with their dismal forebodings of the downfal of Christianity, or with shrieks of laughter still more revolting when they thought that their object was accomplished. All these, however, were soon to be put to flight by that of

which they professed themselves to be all the while most devoted worshippers—the light of truth.

In the year 1819, an important and highly interesting essay appeared in the supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica, under the article "Egypt," which was understood and acknowledged to be the production of Dr. Thomas Young, a gentleman whose great talents and varied acquirements both in science and literature have seldom been equalled, perhaps never surpassed. This elaborate article embodied the result of a laborious comparison of the three inscriptions on the pillar of Rosetta, and gave a list of more than 200 groups of hieroglyphic characters to which this comparison had enabled him to assign some probable meaning. A considerable number of these proved afterwards to be correct.

Much attention was excited by this announcement, and efforts were made by many learned men to extend and apply Dr. Young's discoveries, by which the following most important fact regarding the nature of the Egyptian writings had been established. He demonstrated that the two unknown inscriptions were as to their mode of expressing ideas identical; the middle one being in good measure a corruption or running form of the upper one. Amongst other important discoveries, the mode of numeration used in the hieroglyphic writings was satisfactorily ascertained by the researches of Dr. Young.*

Still, however, the subject remained in an imperfect state. It seemed scarcely possible to deduce from these few ascertained facts what was the nature of this ancient system of expressing or rather of concealing ideas; that is, whether

* Units.  Tens.  Hundreds. Thousands. 

the hieroglyphic characters were the signs of sounds or the pictures of things; and until this had been settled, it was of course in vain to attempt any application or extension of the knowledge gained upon the subject.

Another discovery, however, was soon afterwards made through the labours of the zealous and indefatigable person to whom we have just alluded, Champollion. A small obelisk had been found in the island of Philé by Belzoni, whose name is well known as an adventurous and successful explorer of the remains of ancient Egypt: this was afterwards brought to England by Mr. Bankes, and copies of it were transmitted by him to various learned bodies on the continent. It was remarkable for a Greek inscription on the square base, which is a supplication of the priests of Isis residing at Philé to King Ptolemy, to Cleopatra his sister, and to Cleopatra his wife. On the obelisk itself was an hieroglyphic inscription, in the course of which a group of characters occurred enclosed in a ring or frame: this same group was also found on the pillar of Rosetta, and had there been very nearly demonstrated to contain the proper name of *Ptolemy;*

but there was also another group on the obelisk which, supposing this assumption to be correct, must necessarily also contain the name of Cleopatra; as the inscription on the base expressly referred to the consecration of the obelisk to these two personages. The comparison and analysis of these two names is in itself curious and in its results most important. We give a brief extract from the letter

of M. Champollion to M. Dacier, in which he first announced his discovery.

"The first sign of the name of Cleopatra which represents a kind of quadrant, and which ought to be the letter K (C,) should not occur in the name of Ptolemy, and it is not there. The second, a crouching lion, which should represent the L, is identical with the fourth of Ptolemy, which is also an L. The third sign is a feather or leaf, which should represent the short vowel E. Two similar leaves may be observed at the end of the name of Ptolemy, which by their position must have the sound of E long. The fourth character to the left represents a kind of flower or root with its stalk bent downwards, should answer to the letter O, and is accordingly the third letter in the name of Ptolemy. The fifth to the right is a sort of square, which should represent the letter P, and it is the first in the name of Ptolemy. The sixth to the left is a hawk, which should be the letter A. That letter does not occur in the Greek name Ptolemy, neither does it occur in the hieroglyphic transcription. The seventh is an open hand representing the T, but this character is not found in the name Ptolemy, where the second letter T is expressed by the segment of a sphere. The author thought that these two characters might be homophonic, that is, both expressing the same sound, and he was soon able to demonstrate that his opinion was well founded. The eighth sign, a mouth seen in front, ought to be the letter R, and as that letter does not occur in Ptolemy it is also absent from his hieroglyphic name. The ninth and last sign, which ought to be the vowel A, is a repetition of the hawk, which has that sound in the sixth. The signs of the feminine on each side of this hawk terminate the name of Cleopatra; that of Ptolemy ends with a bent stalk, which we conclude to be the letter S."

This ingenious analysis put the author in possession of

eleven hieroglyphic characters, representing vowels, consonants, or diphthongs of the Greek alphabet. The great works on Egypt, published by the French government, and containing the results of the labours of the body of learned men who, as before stated, accompanied the expedition to that country, supplied him with abundant materials wherewith to extend his discovery. The names of Alexander Berenice and the Ptolemies Alexander, and Neo-Cæsar, pretty nearly completed the list of the names of the Macedonian sovereigns of Egypt, and made many further additions to the hieroglyphic alphabet; fully establishing the singular principle that homophons, or different characters denoting the same sounds, were employed.

Another, and still more extraordinary discovery, arose from the application of the knowledge thus acquired. Champollion read the Greek names and titles of the Roman emperors transcribed in hieroglyphic characters: and since then, the names of most of them, from Augustus down to Caracalla, have been found thus engraved on the walls of the temples of Egypt.

An interesting, as well as amusing result, was noticed in the first announcement of the discovery. Champollion read upon the circular Zodiac of Dendara the titles of Augustus Cæsar; and upon the square one at Esneh the name of Antoninus. That temple, then, which M. Dupuis had demonstrated to be 4000 years older than the Christian era, proved to have been built about the time of its commencement; while the temple at Esneh, to which another authority had assigned an antiquity of at least 17,000 years before that

period, ought to have been dated 140 years after it. These were the first-fruits of this extraordinary discovery; and it is pleasant to have to relate that they thus subserved the cause of scriptural truth. The bold assertions of these infidels regarding the extreme antiquity of the zodiacs, had certainly made a considerable impression in this country as well as on the continent.

The effect of this complete exposure of their groundlessness was highly beneficial. It exercised much influence in exposing the pretensions of a class of arrogant writers upon antiquity, who had assumed a tone of all but infallibility in perverting every thing to be found upon any part of this subject, either in existing remains or in ancient writings, to support their opposition to the Bible.

The key to the Egyptian hieroglyphics was now evidently discovered. An attempt made to limit their alphabetic use to the rings or cartels containing the names of Greek or Roman potentates, by certain learned persons who were too much wedded to ancient prepossessions to admit readily the overthrow of them, proved to be vain. A work published in 1824,* established the reality and importance of the whole discovery, in a manner too apparent to admit of further question.

Another and still more powerful impulse was hereby given to research into the antiquities of Egypt. That interesting country was visited by travellers from all the nations of Europe, for the sole purpose of studying this new subject on the walls of the monuments themselves; and it also engaged the attention of many Europeans who were resident there, both in public and private capacities.

* Précis du système Hieroglyphique, &c. par Champollion le jeune.

Amongst these, Sir J. G. Wilkinson, Mr. Burton, and the late Mr. Salt are entitled to be honourably mentioned for their indefatigable exertions in collecting antiquities and obtaining correct drawings of the paintings and inscriptions on the temples and tombs.

In the year 1828, the French and Tuscan governments sent out a commission of learned men of both countries to Egypt for the express purpose of making drawings and collections of every kind, which might contribute to the advancement of this new department of literature. The expedition was under the direction of Champollion, and of Dr. Rosellini, an Italian antiquary of considerable eminence, who both accompanied it. It consisted of artists, draftsmen and engineers, all of whom were abundantly supplied with the instruments that might be needed to make their professional knowledge available. The expedition remained in Egypt for upwards of two years; and on their return, they brought back with them very large collections, both of drawings and antiquities. A great many precautions were taken to insure the correctness of these copies; so that upon this most important point they may be entirely trusted. They are now in the course of publication by both governments, and are supplying an invaluable mass of materials for investigation and research. The means of pursuing these investigations are also afforded by the publication of the "Grammaire Egyptien" of Champollion, whose death, in 1831, has greatly impeded the progress of the subject. The publication of this monument of the talent, learning, and industry of its much lamented author is, however, still incomplete.

From these and other authorities, we proceed to give some account of the system of writing in use among the ancient Egyptians.

According to a very obscure and difficult passage in the fifth book of the Stromata of Clement of Alexandria there were three different systems of writing in Egypt, and the existing remains partially confirm this account. The Egyptians had certainly three modes of writing the characters of which their system was composed, though not three systems, and these will now be considered under the heads into which he has divided them.

## I. Hieroglyphic Writing.

This was the original mode of Egyptian writing, and of which the other two are deteriorations or corruptions. The characters of which it is composed are all the representations of physical objects more or less exact according to the state of art at the period of the monuments on which they are inscribed. These characters represent the ideas and sounds contained in the Egyptian language by the following methods.

1. By direct imitation, that is, by a picture of the object intended to be expressed. Thus the picture of a man denotes a man, and that of a horse a horse.

2. By symbols or enigmas, that is, by the representation of one object conveying the idea of another. Thus the relation of son is denoted by an egg, —a goose, —an eye, —or a seed germinating, .

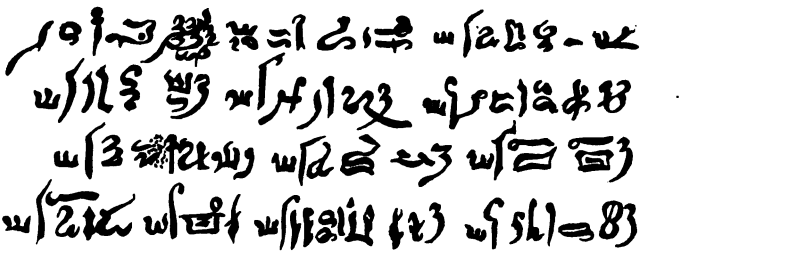
3. By characters grouped together to express the consonants of the required word in the Egyptian language. Thus a crocodile is denoted by three characters which read ⲩⲥⲍ, ; the word for crocodile in the Coptic books is ⲩⲥϭⲍ. This mode of writing, as its Greek name imports, was said by the classic authors to be confined to the priests,

and to be known to them only; but this point is somewhat doubtful. Inscriptions in this character are found upon domestic utensils of every description, such as cooking vessels, vases for perfume, articles of dress, and other objects, to the owners and users of which we must suppose them to have been familiar, as well as upon monuments of a national and sacred nature.

## II. Hieratic Writing.

This mode of writing occurs in the Papyri, which, as before stated, are found in the tombs of Egypt. Some of these papyri are repetitions more or less abbreviated of the great funeral ritual of prayer for the dead, of which some account will hereafter be given. Others contain genealogies of kings, revenues of temples, and other records of public interest. While a third description, still more important, gives the details of the expeditions and foreign conquests of the ancient kings of Egypt. Hieratic inscriptions are occasionally though rarely found on vases, mummy cases, and other similar objects. As to the nature of this mode of writing, it is a running form of hieroglyphics, differing from that system only in the more frequent substitution of alphabetic characters for the other two modes of expressing ideas. It is said by Clement of Alexandria to have been peculiar to the priests, and therefore is called by him hieratic. It would seem to have been termed by Herodotus demotic writing, or that which was in ordinary use.

The following is the first line of a poem in the Hieratic character, describing the campaigns of Sesostris against several Asiatic nations. The original is now in the British Museum.



The translation, so far as it can be at present made out, runs thus:—

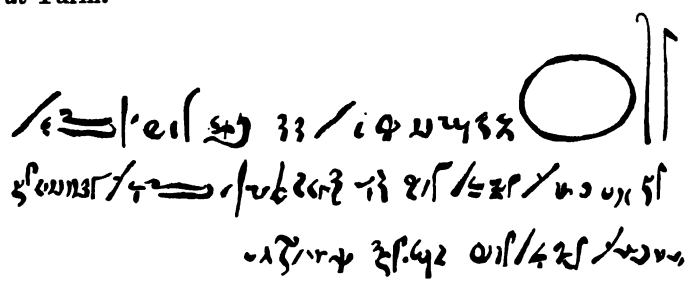
"The wicked race of the country of Scythia, with many kingdoms, the soldiers of the country of Ireto, of the country of Maono, of the country of Toni, of the country of Keshkosh," etc. It proceeds with the names of several other ancient countries, the geography of which is now unknown.

### III. Epistolographic, or Enchorial Writing.

By the first of these epithets Clement designated a third mode of writing, which is supposed to be the same as that which on the pillar of Rosetta is termed Enchorial. Herodotus, however, mentions only two modes of writing in Egypt; and as a very minute comparison of the texts has shown that this character is a mere deterioration of the Hieratic, the conclusion has been very generally arrived at, that it is of comparatively modern origin, and that it made its appearance on the decline of the arts in Egypt. No documents in this mode of writing are known which bear an earlier date than that of the Ptolemies. Besides the pillar of Rosetta, several papyri, having Greek translations, are written in it, which are generally contracts for the tenure of land, or similar property. In one instance, the

prayers used in the worship of Isis, are written in the Enchorial character, accompanied by a Greek translation.*

The following is a specimen of Enchorial Writing, taken from the beginning of *Papyrus, No.* 36, of the Royal Museum at Turin.



*Translation.*

"In the 36th year, on the 18th of the month Athyr, of the reign of the sovereigns Ptolemy, and Cleopatra his sister, the children of Ptolemy and Cleopatra gods Epiphanes." The whole is a contract for the sale of the profits of the offerings in certain mummy caves or tombs.

It will plainly appear from what has been stated, that the Egyptians had not three distinct systems of writing, but three different modes of tracing the characters of the same system; each of which, however, must be separately studied, in order to their being satisfactorily deciphered. The present observations will therefore be confined to the hieroglyphics, merely noticing that the other two have also rendered essential service in aiding the discoveries of the learned.

We now proceed to explain the

PHONETIC ALPHABET.

On the establishment of Christianity in Egypt, the ancient

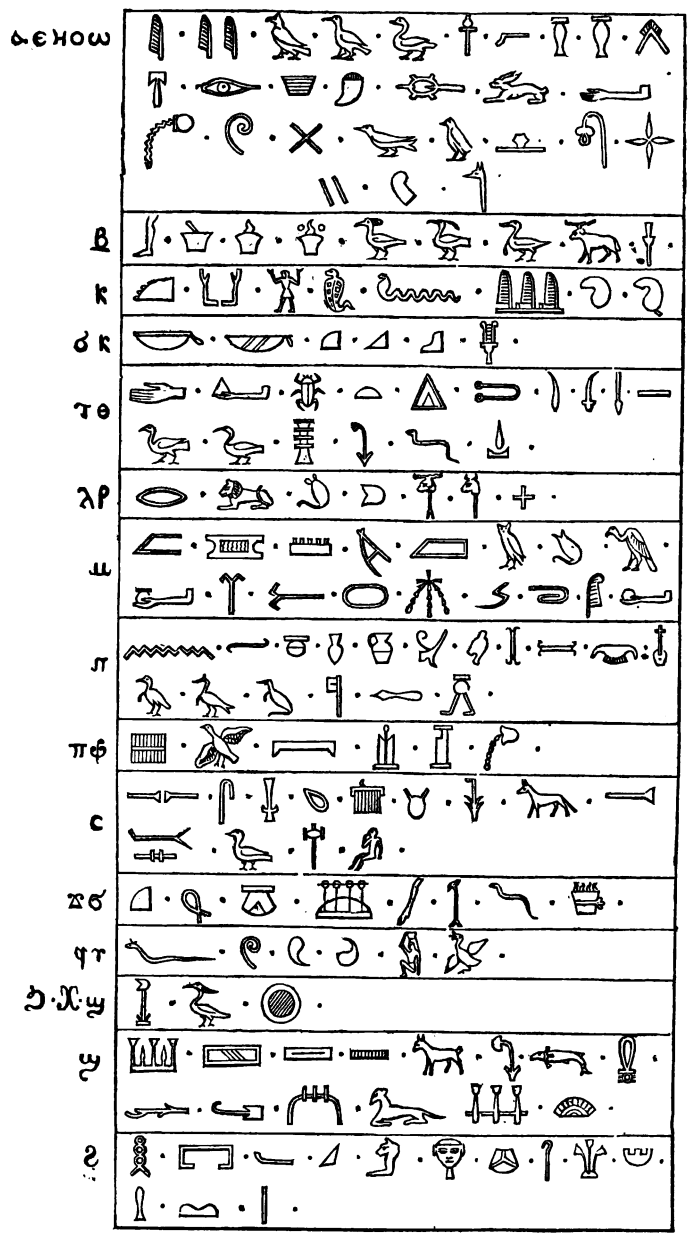
* In the Museum at Leyden: a very interesting account of it has been published by Dr. Lemans the curator.

system of writing was rejected on account of its associations with idolatry; and the translations of the Bible and other religious books are written with Greek characters. There were, however, six sounds in Egyptian which did not occur in Greek, and the characters for these they borrowed from the ancient enchorial system. They are here subjoined:—

| | | | Corresponding Enchorial characters. |
|---|---|---|---|
| ⲯ | pronounced | sh | 𐌢 |
| ⲫ | ,, | F | 𐌦 |
| ϫ | ,, | ch guttural | 𐌣 |
| ϩ | ,, | H | 𐌡 |
| ϫ | ,, | J | 𐌧 |
| ϭ | ,, | SH | 𐌩 |

The Egyptian resembles the Hebrew, the Arabic, and other oriental languages, in the great uncertainty of its vowels. Words are written in the Coptic texts with many different vowels; thus, the word which signifies "to wrap up, to fold," is written ⲕⲁⲗ, ⲕⲉⲗ, ⲕⲟⲗ ⲕⲱⲗ, without the slightest change in the sense. They are also sometimes written without vowels: as, ⲧⲛⲧⲛ, to drop. It will be observed, that in the annexed alphabet all the vowels are indiscriminately represented by one set of characters.

The Coptic books are written in three different dialects, corresponding to the three great divisions of Egypt. The dialect of Lower Egypt is called by the grammarians the Memphitic; that of Middle Egypt, the Bashmuric; and that of Upper Egypt, the Sahidic. The differences between these dialects consist entirely in the employment of different consonants to spell the same word; thus ϫⲟⲩ, to be strong, in the Memphitic, is written ϭⲟⲩ in the Sahidic; and ⲣⲱⲙⲉ, a man, in the same dialect, is written ⲗⲱⲙⲉ in the Bashmuric.


ΑΕΗΟΩ
Β
Κ
Δ Κ
Τ Θ
Λ Ρ
Μ
Ν
Π Φ
C
Σ Δ
Φ Τ
Ϣ Χ Ϭ
Ϩ
Ϫ

All the consonants which thus interchange with each other are written with the same set of Phonetic characters in hieroglyphics. This will account for their being grouped together in the preceding table, the top compartment of which contains the hieroglyphics corresponding to the Coptic vowels, which are written against it. The consonants follow in the order in which they occur in the Coptic alphabet, the several hieroglyphic signs which represent them being grouped together in the compartments opposite to them.

## CHAPTER V.

### CONSTRUCTION OF THE LANGUAGE AND WRITING OF ANCIENT EGYPT.

THE Egyptian language is one of great simplicity of structure, both in its roots and in its grammatical forms. Many of the appellatives of living beings are imitations of the sounds they utter: for instance, the ass was ⲉⲱ eo; the lion ⲙⲟⲩⲉ moue; the ox ⲉϩⲉ ehe; the frog ϫⲣⲟⲧⲣ chrour; the cat ϣⲁⲩ shaou; the hog ⲣⲓⲣ rir; the hoopoe ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲡⲏⲡ petepep; the serpent ϩⲟϥ hof, hfo. In the same manner, the names of inanimate objects or modes of existence are evidently intended to represent the sounds which proceed from them: thus ⲥⲉⲛⲥⲉⲛ sensen, means to sound, to sing; ⲟⲩⲟⲇⲟⲩⲉⲇ ouodjouedj, to chew; ϫⲣⲉⲙⲣⲉⲙ kremrem, a noise; ⲕⲣⲁⲇⲣⲉⲇ kradjredj, to grind the teeth; ⲧⲉⲗⲧⲉⲗ teltel, to drop, fall in drops; ⲟⲙⲕ omk, to swallow; ⲣⲟⲇⲣⲉⲇ rodjredj, to rub, to polish.

The mental emotions are expressed in Coptic by various qualifications of the word signifying the heart, ϩⲏⲧ het, which was supposed to be the seat of them. Thus, to be in concord, is to be one-hearted ϩⲏⲧⲡⲟⲧⲟⲧ; a coward is little-hearted ϩⲏⲧϣⲏⲙ; a patient man is heavy-hearted ϩⲁⲣⲱϩⲏⲧ; a proud person has a high, lofty heart

ⲥⲟⲥⲓϩⲏⲧ; a timid person is weak-hearted ⲙⲟⲃϩⲏⲧ; an indecisive person has two hearts ϩⲏⲧⲃ; while a penitent is said to eat his heart ⲟⲧⲉⲙϩⲑⲏⲩ. Notions still more abstracted are also expressed by similar compounds: thus, to reflect, is to make the heart come ⲉⲓϩⲏⲧ; to persuade, is to mingle, temper the heart ⲑⲟⲧϩⲏⲧ; to trust, confide, to offer the heart ⲕⲁϩⲏⲧ; to observe, examine, ⲧϩⲏⲧ to give the heart; to know is to find the heart ⲥⲉⲙϩⲏⲧ; and to satisfy, to fill the heart ⲙⲉϩϩⲏⲧ.

Another class of ideas is conveyed by the compounds of the word ⲧⲟⲧ hand; as, to help, to give the hand ⲧⲧⲟⲧ; to begin, to put forth the hand ϩⲓⲧⲟⲧ. Other parts of the body are also applied in the same way to express states of the mind. Thus, ⲙⲁⲩⲧⲙⲁⲕϩ stiff-necked, means obstinate; ⲥⲁⲟⲉϩⲁⲗ lofty-eyed, denotes audacity; ϩⲁⲗⲏⲧ eye in the heart, clever, witty; ⲉⲗⲕⲱⲗ to draw in the nose, to laugh at. Personal acts, also, are made to denote mental states; as ⲁⲩⲥⲓⲣ fly-seeker, a covetous man.

The grammatical forms of this singular language partake of the same peculiarity. The commonest modifications of speech, even the oblique and objective cases of the pronoun, are expressed by referring to a physical object; thus, to me, is, according to the sense of the passage in which it occurs, into my hand ⲉⲧⲟⲧ, into my mouth ⲉⲣⲟⲓ, into my stomach ⲉϩⲏⲧ, on my face ⲉⲣⲣⲁⲓ, on my head ⲉⲥⲱⲓ, to my place ⲙⲙⲟⲓ. The most ordinary relations of subjects of speech to each other are thus expressed immediately by reference to parts of the body: thus, within, is, in the stomach ⲉϩⲉⲛ, that is, ⲉϩⲏⲧⲛ; out, is, from the eye ⲉⲃⲟⲗ. The very particles which are prefixed to the verbs to denote the variations of tense, are all significant. The

prefix to the present definite is ϵρϵ, an act, to the future indefinite is ϵι, to come, to the future definite ⲡⲁϣ, to come, to the imperative ⲙⲁ ⲙⲟι, to give, etc.

The structure of the system of writing employed by the ancient Egyptians corresponds with that of the language itself. We proceed to examine it.

Of the three modes of expressing ideas in use among the ancient Egyptians, the first or imitative characters have already been sufficiently explained to be pictures of the objects denoted; as ⊙ the sun, ☽ the moon, ✶ a star. The other two modes will require a more extended notice.

## Symbolic Characters.

The power of imitative characters to express ideas must in the nature of things be very limited. They are able to express but a small portion of that which occurs to the mind. We can, it is true, denote a complete idea of them; but it must be by grouping them together, in which case they form a design or picture, according to the rules of an art altogether distinct from that of writing, which last consists in expressing word for word the sounds that convey the idea in spoken language. But no series of representations of physical objects, each thus restricted in meaning, that we can devise, will so convey any judgment or act of the mind, as to be intelligible to another person. The reason of this is obvious. The majority of the words used in speaking do not convey the idea of visible objects; and we should meet with the same impossibility of expressing an act of the mind, if we were to substitute words, which have this power, for pictures; that is, if instead of a picture of each, thus we were to write the words horse, crocodile,

altar. It is probable that out of this necessity has arisen the contrivance of symbolic or figurative characters. They may be thus defined; a character representing the form of one object, and conveying the idea of another. There are various methods of effecting this in the ancient Egyptian writings.

1. A part is substituted for the whole. Thus, two arms, the one with a shield, the other with a battle axe, denote an army or a combat, as Horapollo informs us, lib. ii. c. 5; and as we frequently find in the existing texts; so the head of a goose denotes geese, and the two pupils of the eyes the eyes.

2. The effect is often put for the cause, the cause for the effect, and the instrument for the work produced. Thus the crescent with the horns downwards, denoted a month, as we learn both from Horapollo, lib. i. hier. 4, and the texts: a column of smoke issuing from a chafing-dish denotes fire on the same authorities. So the picture of the sun  represents the day, of which it is the cause; and so also the idea of letters or writing is denoted by the representation of the reed or pencil, combined with the ink-horn and palette, which were the instruments employed by the sacred scribes in writing the hieroglyphics, . Horapollo, i. 51.

3. Some fancied resemblance between the object represented and the idea conveyed has, in many cases, prompted the substitution. Thus, contemplation or vision was denoted by the eye of the hawk , because that bird was supposed to possess the power of gazing upon the sun. In this reading, also, the authority of Horapollo is supported by that of the existing texts. Priority or pre-eminence is conveyed by

the foreparts of a lion , Hor. i. 18. A sovereign is denoted by a bee, (probably the queen bee,) , Hor. ii. 16, because this insect submits to a regular government; and by a fox or jackal, one of the hierogrammatists or sacred scribes, whose duty it was to take account of the revenues, etc. of temples, over which they ought to watch like faithful dogs, Hor. i. 38, and the texts.

4. The resemblance between the object represented and the idea conveyed, was often enigmatical, very distant and obscure; in many there was no relation whatever between the two but that of pure convention. So they symbolized justice by an ostrich feather , because all the feathers in the wing of that bird are equal, Hor. i. 38; and a palm branch signified the year, because they supposed that this tree grew twelve branches every year, and one every month, ib. i. 3. A hawk perched upon a standard , conveyed the idea of God, or Divine Being, Hor. i. 6; and a basket woven of rushes of different colours, that of Lord, Ruler.

5. Another species of symbol was also discovered by the industry and analytical tact of Champollion. It arises out of a peculiarity of the language of ancient Egypt which it has in common with the Chinese,—the employment of the same sound to express many different ideas. Taking advantage of this circumstance to render their writing more intelligible, the representation of one object was made the symbol of another idea, because both were denoted by the same sound, or nearly so, in the spoken language. Thus the character is the picture of the thigh of some animal, dressed and prepared for sacrifice, or the table, which in Egyptian is , and in this primary sense it is frequently

used in the texts: but it is quite as frequently applied also in passages where it has been ascertained to mean "to be born of, descended from;" because the word ϣϫ also means to be born, in the spoken language. The hatchet 𓌳 named ⲧⲉⲣ is one of the commonest symbols of "God, or Divine Being," because that idea was denoted by the same sound ⲧⲉⲣ. The weaver's shuttle 𓍿 is the symbol of the goddess Neith, the Egyptian Minerva, because the Coptic word for that instrument is ϫⲁⲧ, ϫⲁⲑ.

The idea of a physician is frequently represented by a species of duck 𓅱, the name of which was ⲤⲀⲒⲚ ϮⲂⲈ: the Egyptian word for physician was also ⲤⲀⲒⲚⲒ. This singular mode of suggesting words by pictures is extensively used in the written system of the Chinese, and is allied to that whereby the phonetic characters have been formed.

## Phonetic Characters.

These, as we have already explained, are the pictures of physical objects, denoting not ideas but letters, that is, sounds or articulations. The principle upon which this alphabet has been constructed is simple and curious. The object depicted has been made the representative of the sound with which its Egyptian name commenced. For example:—

| | | | Egyptian Name. | | Representative Sound. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 𓇋 | represents | the leaf of a reed | ⲁⲕⲉ | ... | ⲁ |
| | | | ⲟⲕⲉ | ... | ⲟ |
| 𓅃 | ... | an eagle | ⲁⲅⲱⲩ | ... | ⲁ |
| 𓎛 | ... | a field | ⲕⲟⲓ | ... | ⲕ |
| 𓋴 | ... | an Egyptian headdress | ⲕⲁⲙⲩⲧ | ... | ⲕ |
| 𓅓 | ... | an owl | ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲁⲩ | ... | ⲙ |

| | | Egyptian name. | Corresponding sound. |
|---|---|---|---|
| represents | a mouth | ⲣⲟ ... | ⲣ |
| ... | a beetle | ϑⲱⲣⲉ ... | ϑ |
| ... | an egg | ⲥⲟⲟⲧⲉⲉ ... | ⲥ |
| ... | a hand | ⲧⲟⲧ ... | ⲧ |
| ... | a lioness | ⲗⲁϐⲱ ... | ⲗ |
| ... | a reservoir with water | ⲯⲓ ... | ⲯ |

The difficulty and confusion that at first sight might seem to arise from the use of homophons, or many characters to denote the same sound, are thus obviated. The sound was at once suggested by the name of the object in the spoken language. This multiplicity of characters arose out of the taste of the hierogrammatists for a certain symmetry of arrangement, which appears to have been their principal guide in the choice of them.

The hieroglyphics may be written both vertically and horizontally, and from left to right, as well as from right to left; so that some variety in the size and dimensions of the characters is needful in order to the production of an equally harmonious and pleasing effect in all these different positions.

These three modes of expressing ideas were combined together in the hieroglyphic system of ancient Egypt. We will now briefly explain its grammatical structure.

The most remarkable feature in it, and one constantly occurring, is that which has been called the determinative character, which may be thus explained. Groups of characters representing sounds are generally followed by a picture of the object which these sounds together denoted. Thus the three characters which denote the letters

ϵϱϵ are generally followed by the picture of a cow; and the Coptic word for that animal is also ϵϱϵ. This principle has proved a most important one in elucidating the meaning of a great number of groups, which are thus defined with absolute certainty. Some specimens of beasts and birds are here subjoined:—

ape, goat, pig, horse, dog, a lion, a wolf, a duck, a hawk, a vulture, an eagle.

This singular echo to the sense has also been the means of preserving to us the ancient Egyptian names of several birds and animals, which are not to be found in the existing Coptic texts; some of these still occur in the Arabic, as Arab., a fox; Arab., cameleopard, giraffe; others have perished from both the languages now known in Egypt. Of this description are a number of birds in the tomb of Nevopth, at Beni Hassan, exquisitely designed, and accurately coloured, and each accompanied by a group of characters expressing the sounds of its name.*

The meanings of other groups also are verified in the same manner; thus a tooth, lips, wing, a scorpion, the moon, the sun, a balance, a sickle, grain, seed.

Determinatives of kind as well as of species have been discovered; thus or , which represents the hinder part of the skin of an ox, denotes that the group which precedes it is the name of a quadruped, as pig. In the same

* See Rosellini Monumenti del Egitto. M. C. Plates viii. to xiv.

way three grains denote the name of a metal or some other substance belonging to the mineral kingdom, as gold, lead, nation.

Verbs, as well as nouns are determined in hieroglyphic writings by pictures representing the kind of action denoted by the verb. We subjoin a few instances: to sculpture, to build; the determinative, the fourth character, is a mason's mallet; to measure, the determinative is a bushel; to weep, an eye shedding tears; to labour, determined by a plough; to distribute, equalize, the determinative is here the plumb-line used in masonry. In these cases, the determinative of the verb is the instrument or means of the action. The following are determinated by that upon which the action is exerted, to strike down, to wound violently; the determinative is a man having his head split with an axe: to open, determined by the two leaves of a folding door: to blow, the determinative is a sail hoisted and distended.

Some verbs, again, were determined by pictures of visible objects, supposed to have some peculiar quality similar to the action or manner of existence denoted by them; to be angry, the determinative is an ape, a very irascible animal: to blush, to be red; determined by a flamingo, or some scarlet wading bird:

to fish, a bird seizing a fish:  to be thirsty, a calf running, and the symbol of water:  to be drunken; the sense of this verb is very significantly determined by the leg of a man being amputated by a knife.

Some of these symbols would seem also to throw light upon the origin of the verbs themselves: the group which we have already remarked upon as the hieroglyphic transcription of the Hebrew and Arab word for the wolf or fox זאב is also frequently used as a verb, with the sense to be cunning, crafty, and evidently representing the Coptic verb ϭⲉϧ, ϭⲱϧ which has the same meaning. In the same way also the other group, the cameleopard, with its name in phonetic characters, Arab spells, and has very frequently the sense of another Coptic verb, ϭⲉⲣ, ϭⲱⲣ, to extend, stretch out. This circumstance illustrates the manner in which the sounds and the characters of this extraordinary language have acted upon each other, and also confirms the position with which we set out, that much design and contrivance, as well as much knowledge, are displayed in its structure. It could not be in ignorance of the qualities and habits of these animals that the name of each was chosen to denote the peculiarities for which each is remarkable.

There are also determinatives which are used after many different groups, expressing verbs, and denoting some quality which is common to all of them. Thus , the symbol of water, serves for the determinatives of verbs expressing the different states of liquids, as, to freeze, to boil, etc.; or actions performed in or by means of liquids, as, to swim, to wash, etc.

Verbs expressing the various states and effects of light are determined by a disc emitting rays . Those relative to fire are followed by a brazier emitting flame or smoke . All verbs denoting the actions of the mouth, such as speaking, shouting, singing, calling, drinking, may be determined by a figure of a man with one hand to his lips , which was for a long time supposed to mean silence.

This very singular principle in the hieroglyphic writings has been extended even further. The pronoun of the first person, whether used as the subject or object of the verb, or in the possessive form with the substantive, is frequently determined by a picture of the person speaking, which, on obelisks and other monuments elaborately finished, is a portrait, with the insignia, habits, and decorations proper to his rank. This determinative alone represents the pronoun in many cases.

The written system of the Egyptians was altogether constructed upon this strange, and, according to our notions, clumsy device.

The grammatical forms of hieroglyphics, written with alphabetic characters, and corresponding very nearly to those in the Coptic texts, and the particles in which the same correspondence was observed, completed the discovery of the mode of reading these writings. Both were ascertained by the comparison of various transcriptions of the same text in the papyri.

The names of the gods of Egypt, and the proper names of kings and of private individuals, will require our attention before we proceed with translated specimens of hieroglyphics.

NAMES OF GODS.

These are frequently written phonetically, and determined by one or more of the following characters :—

A personage with a beard, seated after the Egyptian manner, and in a state of complete repose.

The same figure combined with symbols, the first of which means, pure, the second, living.

Written , a kind of axe, called ⲧⲏⲣ, and the symbol of divinity, probably because that idea was also conveyed by the word ⲧⲏⲣ. Examples :  Amoun, Month, Ptah.

They are sometimes written symbolically, with the same determinatives: as in the following instances :—

Osiris, Osiris, Horus, Re, or Phre.

The determinative has often the head-dress peculiar to the god whose name it expresses : for example :—

ⲁⲙⲟⲩⲛ Amoun, ⲭⲱⲛⲥ Chous, the eldest son of Amoun, Hercules, Ptah, ⲡⲧⲁϩ Vulcan.

Sometimes the determinative has the head of the animal which is consecrated to the divinity, instead of the human head, as Chnouphis, Re or Phre, the Sun.

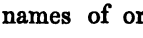
The name of a divinity may also be expressed by the figure of the bird or animal consecrated to it, accompanied by certain symbols. Thus: Phre, Chons, Socharis, Thoth, Anubis, Bubastis.

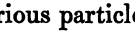
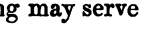
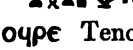
The names of goddesses are generally determined by a sitting female figure, the hatchet with the feminine article, or the hooded snake, . They are also represented and determined by images and symbols, like those of the gods.

It appears from hence that the same idea may be expressed in hieroglyphics either by a picture, a symbol, a group of alphabetic characters, or by a combination of any two, or all three of them.

### EGYPTIAN PROPER NAMES.

The names of private individuals are determined by the picture of a man or woman according to the sex. The name of a man of rank is often followed by . This determinative is generally followed, sometimes displaced by the group; compounded of  truth, and to speak, utter; truth-teller. The whole group is frequently abbreviated thus, : this qualification is applied to both the living and the dead.

The Egyptian proper names were all significant. Some of them are the names of organic beings, as  (lion) man (lotus-flower,) man. But the great majority of them are compounds of the names of divinities, with various particles.

The following may serve as specimens of Egyptian proper names :—  Sa-Amoun, man,  Poeri, man; Ptah-otph, man; Tenofre, woman;  Tsenre, woman.

### PROPER NAMES OF THE SOVEREIGNS OF EGYPT.

These are always enclosed in an elliptical ring or frame,

which appears, in some measure, to answer the purpose of a determinative to them . In the text, it often determines a group, which reads name, . Probably it represents the inscribed or under side of a scarabæus. The name of the sovereign is written within it, and we find those of gods, and of native and foreign princes so written, when they have been sovereigns of Egypt.

Onnophres, (the revealer of blessings,) a name of Osiris as king of Egypt.

Thothmosis, the name of several of the early kings.

Cambyses ; a Persian king, who invaded and conquered Egypt.

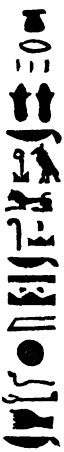
All royal names are double, and generally enclosed in two frames. The first contains the distinctive title of the monarchs, consisting of certain attributes of Phre, (the god sun,) which appears to have been conferred on the monarch at his coronation. The order of the characters is often inverted in this first frame, partly for the sake of symmetry of effect, or more frequently out of respect to the names of divinities occurring in them. This renders their meaning often difficult of discovery, and sometimes even impossible without the aid of transcriptions in hieratic characters, many of which have been recovered.*

We subjoin a few specimens of hieroglyphic sentences from monuments of various descriptions, with translations.

* These remarks upon the grammatical structure of the hieroglyphic writings are from the "Grammaire Egyptien" of Champollion, to which the reader who wishes to pursue the subject is referred.

Their structure is often extremely difficult, requiring much investigation and thought in order to the discovery of the sense; which nevertheless is then sufficiently apparent to the reader.

The following phrase is from the description of Ramses II. trampling upon his enemies, in the cave at Beit el Walley in Nubia:—



under
thy sandals
(is)
Kol the strange land
Ethiopia
(is)
in
thy grasp

"Kol, the strange land, is beneath thy sandals; Ethiopia is in thy grasp." Col, or Cor, was an Asiatic country: Cush, or Ethiopia, denotes the inhabitants of Africa; the exploits of Ramses ainst both are sculptured in this beautiful cave.

The reader will not fail to remark here a striking general resemblance to the phraseology of holy Scripture. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Romans xvi. 20. Christ "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. For he" (the Father) "hath put all things under his feet," 1 Cor. xv. 25—7. The same peculiarity is also observable in the next specimen.

The following is from a tablet on the rock at Ipsambul:—

The above reads, "O thou ruler of Egypt, thou sun of Ethiopia, the impure shall not stand before thee." This is addressed to Ramses III., Sesostris, by the viceroy of Ethiopia.

The same analogy to the measured phrases or parallelisms of the Hebrew poetry will also be noticed in the following, from the western face of the obelisk at Luxor, which has been recently removed to Paris, and erected on the Place de la Concorde in that city.

Thy name
(is)
firm
as heaven
the duration of thy days (is as)
the disc of the sun.

This is also addressed to Sesostris.

The frequency of the occurrence of this construction in the hieroglyphic texts, gives us reason to hope that valuable assistance in illustration both of the phraseology and the imagery employed in holy Scripture may be derived from the study of them.

His hand
is
firm
on
his chariot
like
Monthou, (Mars,) literally "the lord of the land of purity and justice," (Egypt,) a very common epithet of Monthou.

This is a description of Ramses II. in his chariot, defeating the Ethiopians; in the cave at Beit-el-Wally, in Nubia.

The following is a remarkable threshing song.

Tread ye out (The Coptic word which signifies to tread out is ϩⲓ, probably the sound uttered by the drover; it is here denoted by the letter ϩ and a man in the act of driving cattle.

for yourselves

twice (that is, this sentence to be sung twice.)

O Oxen

Tread ye out

for yourselves

Tread ye out

for yourselves

straw (Coptic ⲧⲟϩ)

for

men

the grain (the character is a bushel pouring out grain.)

who (are)

your masters.

This most ancient labour song is inscribed over a man driving two yoke of oxen, treading out a floor of corn, in a tomb at Elethya. It is evidently the strain or measure usually sung by those engaged in this occupation. The first word, which signifies the act of treading out, is the Coptic word ϐⲓ which has the same meaning, and was probably the sound uttered by the drovers to stimulate these animals. This accounts for the repetition. Like all similar songs in all countries, it is rude and simple; but nevertheless the construction is rhythmical.

Tread out for yourselves,
Tread out for yourselves,
O Oxen.

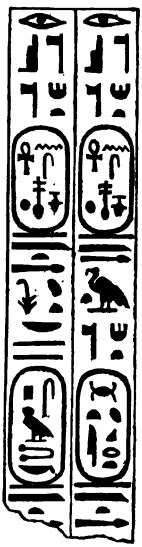
Tread out for yourselves,
Tread out for yourselves,
The Straw;

For man, who is your master,
The Grain.

It might be thus paraphrased in English:—

Heigh, heigh, Oxen, tread the corn faster;
The straw for yourselves, the grain for your master.

This simple strain furnishes a pleasing comment upon the Scripture precept regarding this operation of agriculture, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn," Deut. xxv. 4, which is quoted by the apostle Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, with the addition, "And, the labourer is worthy of his reward." The song before us, as well as the picture that it accompanies, would seem to imply that this merciful injunction was contrary to the custom in Egypt.



Col. 1. The Osirian (that is, the deceased) Queen, (Onk-nas, sun with the good-heart,) the truth-teller. The royal daughter of (Psametik) the truth-teller.

Col. 2. The Osirian (deceased) queen (Onk-nas, sun with the good heart,) the truth-teller: her mother was the divine queen (Nitocris,) the truth-teller.

From the sarcophagus of queen Onk-nas, the sister of the Pharaoh Hophra mentioned in the Scriptures, and the wife of Amasis, by whom that Pharaoh was deposed and ultimately strangled. This sarcophagus was found at Thebes, behind the palace of Luxor, in a pit-vault which had been hewn in the rock to the depth of 125 feet. It had been broken open, and the body taken out and set fire to at a very early period; the half-burnt remains were found close to the sarcophagus. Herodotus mentions that Cambyses, the Persian, violated the tombs both of Amasis and his queen when he conquered Egypt. This interesting monument was found by the officers of the vessel sent from France to convey the obelisk of Luxor to Paris; it is now in the British Museum.

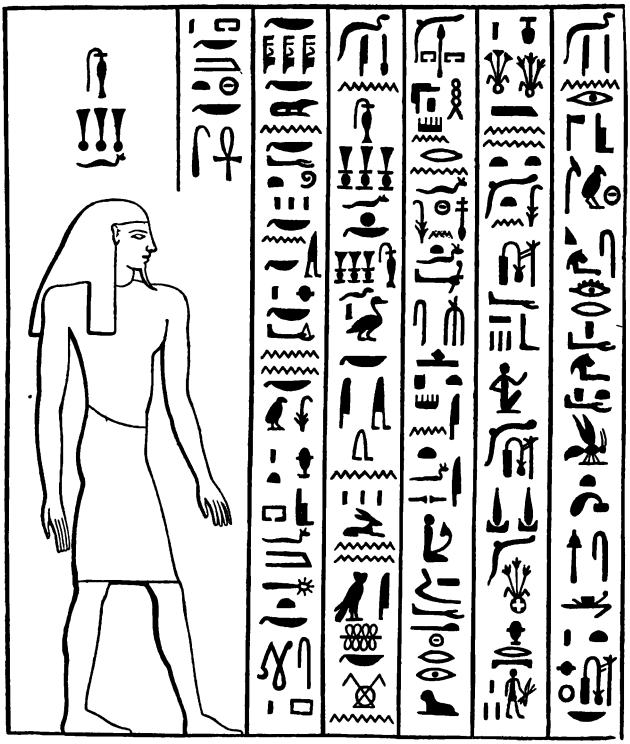
Chnumis, or Chubis with the ram's head, is the creative form of Amoun. He is represented in the act of making the mortal part of Osiris out of a lump of clay, in the mystic chamber at Philoe.*

* *Rosellini* M. d. C. pl. 22.

The following is another specimen:—

May
thy soul
attain (come)
to
Chumis, (one of the forms of Amoun, the [creator.)
the creator, (the idea is denoted by a [man building the walls of a city.)
of
all
mankind, (literally men and women.)

The clay is placed upon a potter's wheel, which he turns with his foot while he moulds it with his hands. The inscription which accompanies it reads, " Chnum, the creator, on his wheel creates the divine members of Osiris, in the shining house of life," that is, in the disc of the sun. The chamber in which this sculpture occurs represents the embalming and creating anew of the mummy of Osiris, according to a mythological fable, which has been preserved by Plutarch.* Osiris was slain by Typhon, the evil principle; cut to pieces, and his members scattered over all Egypt. Isis his wife, and Horus his son, collected them together, embalmed him at Philoe, and buried him at Abydos.



* De Iside et Osiride.

The engraving on p. 110 is from a beautiful stone coffin, now in the British Museum, Saloon, No. 23, which was formerly used as a reservoir in the mosque of Joseph, at Cairo. It was called by the Arabs, The Lovers' Fountain. The first three lines of inscription beginning from the right, read as follows: "The discourse of the Osirian.* Lord keeper of the royal signet of approved engraving; scribe or clerk of the clothes and rings, (of the king's house.) Lord of the Nilometers of Upper and Lower Egypt. President of the royal clerks of provisions; President of the engravers on hard stones; Governor of Lower Egypt, General of infantry, President of the treasury, (the house of silver.) HAPIMEN, the truth-teller; whose father was Nofre-chons, and his mother Otph-amoniots, to Osiris."† It was the natural consequence of the strictly hereditary nature of all offices in Egypt, that at the later periods of its history many of them should centre in the head of one family. The style of sculpture of this sarcophagus shows it to have been executed in the times of Psammetichus, about 600 years A.C. The same peculiarity of many offices held by one individual may be observed on other monuments of the same age.

The other three lines of the inscription are the speech of the divinity represented in the picture. His name was Kebh-sneu; he was one of four brothers, the sons of Osiris, who especially presided over the embalming of the viscera; he is often represented with the head of a sparrow-hawk, his three brothers had respectively those of a man, a fox, and an ape. Four jars, having lids shaped like the heads of these

* That is, the deceased, the devoted to Osiris, or image of Osiris. The meaning of the seven following characters is not certain.

† This inscription refers to a device on the lid, which is no longer in existence.

four idols, are often found in the tombs along with the mummy, and contain different portions of the intestines of the deceased person. The inscription reads thus:—"The discourse of Kebh-sneu. I, Kebh-sneu, am thy son; we (probably the four brothers, all of whom are represented on the sarcophagus) come to open thy viscera; to subdue (lay out) thy limbs; to bind thine arms;" (these are all operations of the embalmers.) "We bring thee thine heart; we give them (that is, the whole body: the body in its coffin, the viscera in their jars) to thee in the house of thy race;" that is, in the vault or tomb of the family of Hapimen.

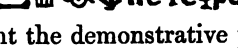
This divinity calls himself the son of the deceased: this is not infrequent. On a splendid mummy-case in the museum at Liverpool, which contains the body of a man named Apries, each of the four says to the deceased, "I am thy son, O Osiris Apries." Mr. Birch, the senior assistant of the British Museum, has very satisfactorily shown, in his description of the coffin of Menchares, that the Egyptians accounted the embalmed body the image or idol of Osiris, the father of these four divinities.

## CHAPTER VI.

### RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

THE whole of the subject which is now before us is still under investigation; and though, as we have seen, much has been already accomplished, yet much remains to be done in every department of it. On the very difficult question of dates especially, large accessions to our knowledge may be expected from future researches; and they are certainly wanted before we can arrive at satisfactory conclusions respecting many of them, and especially those relating to events occurring at early periods of the history of Egypt. It is on this account that we decline entering upon this difficult and by no means interesting subject. It will abundantly suffice to have ascertained, that the civilization, so many monuments of which are now existing in Egypt, is that which prevailed there in the times of Abraham; and this is a point which we will now endeavour to establish.

It has been already noticed that, according to the Scriptures, Egypt was then governed by a monarch who took the title of Pharaoh. This title is written in the Hebrew Bible פרעה, Pharaoh. By the help of two other Egyptian names, which also occur in the inspired narrative, we shall be able to discover its meaning. The one is that of the

priest of On, whose daughter the patriarch Joseph married, פוטי־פרע, Potipherah, or Potiphrah, Gen. xli. 45. This name is by no means uncommon on mummy cases and similar remains; and is written in hieroglyphics thus:  . The first two characters represent the demonstrative pronoun , signifying "he who belongs to;" the third corresponds to the definite article or ; the fourth is the representation of the disc of the sun surrounded by the Uræus, or hooded snake, the symbol of sovereignty. The Egyptian word for the sun is ; פרע in the Hebrew is therefore represented in the hieroglyphics by .

The other Egyptian name written in Hebrew characters, which we will endeavour to analyze, is that of one of the treasure cities which the children of Israel built in Egypt after they were made bondsmen. It is written רעמסס Remsses. This name is also a common one with some of the earlier monarchs of Egypt, and a great many transcriptions of it in hieroglyphics have been copied from the monuments. It is not unfrequently written thus ; the first syllable of the Hebrew word רע being represented by the image of the sun's disc , or ; and the last, מסס, by the same consonants, letter for letter, ; the entire name signifying "child, or descendant of the sun." This comparison afforded us the certainty that רע is the Hebrew transcription of the Egyptian word , and that the definite article of the same language is represented by the Hebrew character ם. But the mystic or inaugural title of all the ancient monarchs of Egypt commences, without one

exception, with the image of the sun's disc. The following are given as examples :

One of the fourth dynasty; sun perfecting good offering.

Osbertasen I. of the 16th, sun offered, presented, to the world.

Sun, guardian of justice, approved of the sun; Sesostris, of the 18th.

Psammetichus of the 26th; sun, the good-hearted.

This title, seems to have denoted, that what the sun was in the firmament, that Pharaoh ought to be in Egypt —the sun of his country. It had also a mythic allusion; for over the second ring, which contains the name of the monarch, is very commonly written the group , which reads "son of the sun," allusive to ΦΡΗ, or the god-sun, as the first monarch of Egypt, and of whose throne the Pharaohs were therefore the heirs and successors. Phre seems on this account to have been, in an especial manner, the tutelary divinity of the kings of Egypt. The epithets and names applied to the kings most commonly connect them with this luminary, either by the ties of relationship or friendship, as "child of the sun," "approved of the sun," "beloved of the sun." These considerations appear to justify the conclusion, that the name of the first monarch of Egypt, (according to the fabulous legends of the Egyptians, ΦΡΗ,) became the generic title of all his successors פרעה, Pharaoh; conformably with a custom which also obtained in the neighbouring countries.

The application, therefore, of this name to the monarch with whom Abraham came in contact, is a proof that he was one of that long line of kings, so many of whose titles yet remain, and of which, as we shall see hereafter, Menes was the founder. This proof is independent of that which is furnished by the Scripture dates; and also of the testimony of Josephus, the Jewish historian, who informs us that Menes reigned many years before the patriarch Abraham.*

Another circumstance is also necessary to be fully understood, which is equally important to the question. The religion of Egypt underwent no alteration from the time of its establishment by Menes to that of its abolition by Christianity.

The reading of the hieroglyphics has elicited this singular fact, the proofs of which may be discovered in almost any class of remains to which we direct our attention. A large proportion of those which are deposited in the museums of Europe consists of funereal monuments; such as sarcophagi in granite or alabaster, mummy cases, votive tablets, and papyri. On several of these are inscribed the name of the rulers of Egypt during whose reigns they were executed; and even where this is wanting, the style of the execution will enable a practised eye to determine the date with considerable probability. We know, therefore, that these monuments belong to all the periods of the history of Egypt, from the Pharaohs of the 16th dynasty, who were contemporary with Abraham, down to the emperor Alexander Severus who lived in the third century of the Christian era. The narrow slip of papyrus, covered with a clumsy and almost illegible

* Ant. l. 8. 6. § 2.

scrawl, which accompanies the Egyptio-Greek, or Roman mummy, is a faithful copy, nevertheless, of some part of the long roll of prayers and rubical directions, whose elegantly formed characters, and exquisitely finished illuminations, indicate that it belongs to those remote periods when the arts in Egypt were at their perfection. The same divinities are besought for the same blessings in both. This uniformity is still more evident on the wooden mummy cases, which are very common in all collections. They likewise belong to various epochs. Sotimes, the priest, whose mummy is at Turin, lived in the times of the 18th dynasty, about 1500 years B.C. Ensa-amon, the scribe, whose body is in the Leeds museum, was contemporary with the 20th, about 1100 years B.C. There is a splendid case at Liverpool which had been the depositum of Apries, one of the sons of Psammetichus II., of the 26th dynasty, who lived about 600 years B.C. There are mummy-cases also in the British Museum, and in the Louvre, having Greek inscriptions, which inform us that they contained the remains of the descendants of the same family; and that they died, the one, Petemen, (at Paris) in the 19th year of the emperor Trajan, A. D. 117; the other, Tphout, (Brit. Mus.) in the fifth of Adrian's reign, A.D. 122. But all these are decorated in accordance with the tenets of the same mythic system. Differing from each other very widely as to the pattern or mode of disposing the parts of the picture, the same divinity is, nevertheless, depicted and invoked on all of them, over the same part of the body. So that in the 1600 years which elapsed from the time of Sotimes to that of Tphout, the religion of Egypt had undergone no alteration. This is also corroborated by the numerous similar monuments without dates

which abound in the museums of Europe. They are all embellished after this manner, though belonging to every known period of Egyptian history; as the different styles of art in which they are executed sufficiently indicate.

This immutability of the religion of Egypt, which the monuments existing in Europe thus render so highly probable, is reduced to absolute certainty by the study of the sculptures and inscriptions that cover the remains of the numerous temples which still attest the devotion of the ancient inhabitants of the valley of the Nile to their system of mythic belief. Among the hitherto unsuspected truths which the commission of learned men of France and Italy, to Egypt in 1828, discovered and illustrated, there is not one which was more satisfactorily made out than this. We give at length the account of the circumstances, which prove demonstrably a fact so important to our present argument.

"The temple of Dakke, in Nubia, was begun by the Ethiopian Ergamenes, the contemporary of Nechao; was carried on by Ptolemy Euergetes I., 246 B. C., and by his grandson Euergetes II., B. C. 180; but was completed by the emperor Augustus, A. D. 6. Near the gateway of this temple I discovered the remains of a more ancient one, the dedication of which is still extant on two immense blocks of stone. It was constructed by the Pharaoh Mœris, B. C. 1736, and was consecrated to the same form of Thoth or Mercury as the present temple. Here is a fact which, like many similar ones, proves that Ergamenes and the Ptolemies merely rebuilt the temples in the places where they had existed in the times of the Pharaohs, and in honour of the same divinities which had always been worshipped there.

"This point is a very important one: the latest temples

erected in Egypt contain no new form of divinity. The religious system of this people was so entirely one, so united in all its parts, and prescribed so absolutely and precisely from time immemorial, that the dominion even of the Greeks and Romans produced no innovation upon it. The Ptolemies and the Cesars merely rebuilt the temples which the Persians had destroyed, and dedicated them to the same gods."—*Champollion's Lettres de l'Egypte*, letter xi., p. 151.

"I have ascertained, that at Talmis, in Nubia, there have been *three editions* of the temple of *Malouli*, the god of that district. One built by the Pharaohs in the reign of Amenophis II., B. C. 1723; a second of the era of the Ptolemies; and lastly, the temple now existing, which was never finished, in the times of Augustus, Caius Caligula, and Trajan, A. D. 100; and the hieroglyphic description of the divinity on a fragment of the first temple, which has been used in building the third, differs in nothing from the same legends on the more recent ones. Thus, then, the local worship of all the cities and towns in Nubia and Egypt underwent no modification; and exactly the same idols, whose worship had been instituted at first, continued to be adored up to the day on which their temples were closed for ever by the triumph of Christianity."—P. 157.

The temple of Isis, on the isle of Philé, illustrates the same fact. It was begun by Nectanebo, the last of the native sovereigns of Egypt, then in good part destroyed by Darius Ochus, the Persian; afterwards rebuilt and proceeded with by Ptolemy Philometor, B. C. 189, and finished under the emperors Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius: but it always remained the temple of Isis.

"The temple of Ombos, dedicated to Sevek-ra, (Saturn,)

was built by Ptolemy Euergetes, and on the stones of which it is built are still traceable the inscriptions of a former temple, which had been dedicated by Pharaoh Mœris to the same idol, with the same legends."—P. 14.

"The temple at Esne is the most modern of all the temples of Egypt. It was finished by the emperor Septimus Severus and his son Gæta, A. D. 211. But it also is merely another edition of a former temple, which had been dedicated to the same idols by Pharaoh Mœris."—P. 201.

The immutability of the Egyptian mythology is also abundantly observable in the temples and temple-palaces of Thebes. The additions made to them by the later Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, and the emperors, all carefully abstain from the most distant approach to innovation in their religious allusions. The same divinities are invoked by the same legends on the modern as on the ancient parts of these stupendous monuments of Egyptian greatness.

The dogmas of religion, therefore, which are taught in the papyri and other remains, are assuredly those which prevailed in Egypt in the times of Abraham; and the extraordinary circumstances we have endeavoured to explain, have preserved a vast mass of materials explanatory of its doctrine and ritual, the key to which has now been recovered. It is, therefore, not as a subject of mere idle curiosity that we inquire into the tenets of this most ancient idolatry. The extreme remoteness of the period at which it must have been framed leads us to expect that the immutability which was so successfully impressed upon it may have preserved to us some more evident traces of that religious truth upon which it must have been founded, than we can discover in more modern and mutable

systems of mythology. The guilt and depravity of the framers of this delusion are sufficiently apparent; but, nevertheless, living in the very times of stupendous miracles, which the whole human race beheld, we conjecture beforehand that they dare not have ventured upon that entire disregard of the truth they must have known, which is evident in later inventions of this kind, when the filthy imaginings of the wicked heart run riot, and when truth of every description is well nigh lost.

Upon this point, also, we have the authority of Scripture, not only in the general statement, that God hath not left himself without a witness in any nation; but especially in the historical events which, according to its unerring record, took place in times not far removed, in point of antiquity, from those to which we have traced the Egyptian mythology. The first settlers on the banks of the Nile were probably present at the building of Babel, and therefore something of that knowledge of God of which Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and his family were evidently possessed, would have extended traditionally, at any rate, to them also.

The close analogy that existed between the language and the written characters of ancient Egypt has been already pointed out. The affinity between these last and their religious system was still greater. It was indissoluble; so that when the true light of Christianity dispelled the darkness of this superstition, both perished together. The hieroglyphic system was so entirely bound up with the ancient religion, that to separate the two was impossible. It was, therefore, rejected for the Greek alphabet, with the exception of six characters, representing sounds which, not occurring in that language, were taken, as we have seen, from the demotic mode of

writing hieroglyphics. And now that they are once more legible, they appear to be so interwoven with this false religion, so exclusively adapted for the expression of its dogmas and rituals, that it seems impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that they were made for each other.

Three of the institutions of ancient Egypt, therefore, its language, written system, and religion, would appear to have arisen together. This circumstance refers the latter to a still more remote antiquity; and having already the sanction of the Bible for assuming that it existed in the times of Abraham, there is reason to believe that it embodies the dogmas of one of the earliest departures from that true faith, the knowledge of which God at first had given to mankind by direct communications from himself. Such being the case, the fictions of which it is composed will, in the nature of things, be based upon truth, or rather will be an enlarging and carrying out of some revealed tenet, the truth of which the whole family of man in those times admitted. That the truth, then, should be found there will be to him who now values it an occasion of joy, but no surprise.

From the very brief account which it has pleased the Giver of all wisdom to impart to us respecting the events that accompanied the foundation of the tower of Babel, we learn that it originated in a direct conspiracy against God, in a confederacy of the human race to contravene the command which God had given to Noah, the father of them all, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," Gen. ix. 1. Men had already discovered the advantage to be derived from the combined efforts of a permanently settled and stationary society; they saw that mighty works, works which should endure, which would make a name to the

founders thereof, were only to be accomplished by such a combination; and, therefore, instead of going forth by their tribes, and by their families to possess the earth, according to the commandment, they seem to have leagued together to build a city so spacious that the whole family of man might inhabit it, and a tower so lofty that it might overtop a second deluge, should their impiety provoke their Creator again by that means to seek their destruction.

It is difficult to conceive that a generation of men who had retained the true notion of the Divine Being, with which they who had been saved in the ark must have furnished their posterity, could, nevertheless, fall into the grievous error regarding Him into which the inhabitants of the plain of Shinar were betrayed. The faith once delivered to the saints had, most probably, been debased and corrupted by tradition. The voice of profane history confirms this conjecture. The builders of the tower of Babel seem to have supposed that they could appease the anger of God against their disobedience by dedicating to Him, under a form of their own imagining, the very erection whereby they designed to set his declared purpose at defiance. The tower of Babel was also the temple of Baal.

That idolatry began at Babylon appears probable from the circumstance that in the prophecy of St. John it is made the type of the "mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth," Rev. xvii. 5. The city that originated the heathen idolatry can only truly prefigure the mother of the Christian idolatry. The whole tenor also of the inspired threatenings against Babylon is corroborated by the attestation of profane history to this fact. A little reflection on them will suffice to show that the wrath of Him who is

"slow to anger, and plenteous in loving-kindness, and tender mercies," had been roused against Babylon by causes that lay far deeper than their conduct to the Jews. For it does not appear that the children of the Babylonish captivity were treated with any unusual degree of harshness by their conquerors. The details which are furnished by the inspired history would lead to an opposite conclusion. Their ancestors certainly suffered far more in Egypt. Hence it appears that it was against Babylon, the mother of idolatry, rather than against Babylon, the oppressor of the Jews, that the cleaving curse was denounced, which has consigned one of the most fertile portions of the earth's surface to perpetual barrenness and desolation.

The first settlers on the banks of the Nile, then, were idolaters at heart; they had already drunk deep of "the cup of abominations" which this "mother of harlots" had held forth to them. Knowing much of God, "they glorified him not as God—but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things," Rom. i. 21, 23. The Egyptian sages, as they called themselves, have carried the truth respecting God and religion which they had received, down every step of this anti-climax.

Perhaps the science upon which men first professed themselves wise, upon which they first laid claim to a degree of knowledge superior to that of their fellow-mortals, would be astronomy; for we know assuredly that this was one of the earliest subjects on which "they became fools." That the

glory of the one invisible God might be illustrated by the figure of the most majestic object in the material creation, the one visible sun, is very obvious; and the more minutely we examine the metaphor, the greater will be our admiration of its singular beauty and propriety. The sun is the fountain of light, the source of all joy, yea of life itself, to the animated creation; for, deprived of its cheering rays, all nature would soon droop and die, and the earth become once more "without form and void." In these, and many other particulars, the figure used simply as an illustration is peculiarly appropriate, and is employed in holy Scripture, Psa. lxxxiv. 11.

Mankind seems to have been early led astray into the vain imagination that some analogy far loftier and more mysterious than that of the creature and the Creator existed between God and the sun. The sun was gradually advanced by them from a metaphor to a type, a symbol, an image of God, God's vicegerent in heaven, his living representative, God himself. The deification of the sun would appear to be the earliest form under which idolatry manifested itself. The Egyptians had certainly embraced this false opinion to a great extent. They certainly worshipped the sun. There is scarcely a monument on which that luminary is not represented and invoked as a deity: and according to one ancient writer, they acknowledged no other gods than the heavenly bodies.* The hieroglyphic inscriptions, however, enable us to state, with some degree of certainty, that this account was exaggerated. Their idolatry was by no means pure Sabeism, or worship of the host of heaven. The heavenly bodies seem to have been

* Epistle to Anebo, prefixed to Iamblichus, de Mysteriis Egyptiorum.

accounted by them not as supreme gods, but as symbols, or impersonations of their attributes. The sun in their system was a deity, but the offspring of other deities, and inferior in rank to them. They probably meant that he was a creature subordinate to his Creator; though, at the same time, he was the representative and living image of the one God. Phre, the god sun, is often depicted ministering to the superior divinities. This deification of the sun is well known to be common to all systems of idolatry, and to have been especially conspicuous in that of the inhabitants of Babylon. We again recur to the high improbability that even such a worship should have presented itself to two minds independently, however obvious it may appear when once pointed out. It is a solution of a perplexity, (which becomes impenetrable when other points of identity in all idolatries are also discovered,) to be informed that all these false systems had a common origin. The Scripture declares that all mankind were once of one speech and one language, and that it was in the act of building a temple to the sun that they were miraculously dispersed. Let the infidel discover or invent if he can a solution of the difficulty as satisfactory as this, which the inspired volume gives to him who believes it.

The Egyptians appear to have left the plain of Shinar before the entire degradation took place, into which this doctrine sunk afterwards at Babylon, where Baal was at once the supreme God and the sun; they knew no greater god than he. In the Egyptian mythology, the sun is always the minister of them who made him. The god sun, Phre , occupies the third rank among their idols.

He is the son of Ptha, or Vulcan, the active intelligence that organized the universe. We have already mentioned that he is said to have reigned over the Egyptians, and that his is the first dynasty of the duration of which their annals preserve an account.

The sun in their mythology seems to have subserved the singular purpose of perpetuating, amid the multiplicity of divinities into which their worship was divided, the notion of the Divine unity. The superior gods all add his name to their own; those inferior to him are his immediate descendants. This singular circumstance has probably originated in the notion already explained, of one God, one sun. The Egyptians endeavoured to preserve this double identity throughout their entire system. All their divinities were but emanations from, and parts and attributes of the one God; and, therefore, they were also emanations from, and functions and effects of the one sun.

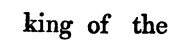
It is thus that the corrupt nature of man has always dealt with the Divine truth. It was seized upon by a few; wrapped up in enigma and mystery, and presented to others in a form greatly distorted. The Egyptian mythology set forth the doctrine of the unity of God in a mode which betrayed its votaries into the lowest depths of polytheism.

The testimony of the Greek authors shows that this conclusion is correct. Porphyry informs us that originally the Egyptians worshipped but one God.* According to Herodotus, the inhabitants of Egypt retained the idea of a God self-existent, and from eternity to eternity. Iamblichus declares that the Egyptians worshipped God, the Master and Creator of the universe, above all the elements, self-existent, immaterial, incorporeal, uncreate, indivisible, unseen, and all-sufficient, who comprehends all things in himself, and imparts all things to all creation.†

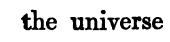
The idea of this unity was conveyed by making the sun the point to which all the parts of the Egyptian polytheism converged, and in which they became one. He was an attribute of all the divinities above him; all those below him in the hierarchy were emanations from or parts of himself.

Such ideas are exceedingly gross and degrading; and they pervade the entire system: it is of "the earth earthy:" it is an attempt to set forth as the objects of worship impersonations of the attributes of the one God, under the veil of odd metaphors and fantastic symbols. "They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into the image of corruptible man," and of every ray of that glory they made a different image. The fact of their real unity was a secret known only to the priests, instead of, as

* De Abstinentia, lib. iv. § 6, etc. † De Myster. Egypt.

it ought to have been, declared upon the house tops. God, the king and ruler of the universe, they set forth under the title of Amoun-ra-sonther; that is, Amoun-ra, king of the gods,  ; or Amoun-ra, lord of

Amoun-ra.

the universe  . He was worshipped in all the temples of Egypt, but principally at Thebes; and was generally represented as seated on a throne, bearing in his right hand the symbol of life, and in his left the staff with the head of the hoopoe, which denotes tranquillity: he wears the royal helmet or crown of the kings of Egypt, surmounted by two long and brilliantly coloured feathers. His skin is of a blue tint. All these peculiarities had, doubtless, some symbolical meaning or allusion.

The Egyptians depicted the Creator of the universe under a form which renders it needful to preface the description of it with some account of animal worship, the lowest degradation to which it seems possible to debase the worship of mankind. "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," more perhaps than any other nation. "The Egyptian temples," says Clement of Alexandria, in a dissuasive from excess in external ornament, *Pæd. lib. 3, c. 2,* "and the propyla (gateways) before them, and their courts, and groves, and consecrated grounds, are all superbly decorated. Their halls, likewise, are supported by innumerable pillars. Their walls glitter with precious stones, and with most skilfully executed pictures, the shrines blaze with gold, and silver, and amber, and with variegated marbles from India and Ethiopia. The adytum, or most sacred place, is overshadowed by a curtain embroidered with gold. But when you enter this sacred enclosure, and are anxious to see that which is most worthy of contemplation, inquire for the image of the divinity that dwells in the temple; perhaps a shrine-bearer, or some other minister attached to the worship that is performed there, looking extremely grave, and singing a hymn in Egyptian, draws aside the veil a little, so that the god appears. But instead of worshipping him, you burst into a hearty laugh. Instead of the god whom we were so anxious to see, we behold a cat, or a crocodile, or a common snake, or some such foul creature, altogether unfit to be in a temple, and only in their places in dark holes, and mud. Behold the god of the Egyptians! a beast, reposing on a piece of purple tapestry!" Without following this zealous Christian writer in his pungent application of this

very graphic description as a rebuke of the excessive love of dress which prevailed among his female contemporaries, we at once perceive its value, as the testimony of an eye witness to the actual state of the Egyptian idolatry,. and to the fact that animal worship was a principal part of it. This is also stated by other ancient writers, who have preserved to us many of the reasons which the Egyptian priests were evidently in the habit of giving to justify this gross absurdity.

According to the lists of Manetho, animal worship was first introduced into Egypt by Chous, the second king of the second dynasty, which shows the general persuasion that prevailed of the exceedingly high antiquity of its institution. It is evidently an essential and component part of the Egyptian idolatry, and therefore must have arisen contemporaneously with the rest of the system. It is merely that impersonation of religious symbols whereby Divine truth has at all times been corrupted. The classic authors have furnished us with abundant materials for ascertaining this. The origin of the whole appears to have been the endeavour to express, in their picture writing, the various attributes of God, by the delineation of a living being, possessing, as they fancied, some similar attribute. These representations are often fantastical and foolish, always degrading. The height and depth of the Divine mind, as comprehending all things, they impersonated by a hawk, because that bird soars perpendicularly up, and drops again perpendicularly down in her flight, contrary to the flight of other birds which ascend and descend through the air obliquely and in spiral lines. Hence the hawk became the living representative, or embodied symbol of many gods. It was also in an especial manner

dedicated to, and representative of the sun, because it was supposed to have the power of gazing steadily upon that luminary without blenching. Horapollo, lib. i. c. 6. The ape, or cynocephalus, was worshipped as the living image of the moon; because, according to their most absurd notions of natural history, the ape becomes blind, and eats nothing during the change, through grief at the absence of that luminary from heaven; and rejoices at its return, by lifting up its hands. It also represented Thoth, the ruler of the moon, and the god of letters; because they fancied that there was one species that was acquainted with the art of writing. Ib. lib. i. 14. Under another aspect Thoth was represented by the ibis, for no better reason than because its plumage is black and white, in which they saw a symbol of the changes of the moon. In these two animals the priests taught the Egyptians that the wisdom of God (or their Thoth) was impersonated. *Plutarch de Iside.* To this extent these sages, "professing themselves wise became fools." It was in the same spirit of coarse symbolism that the vigilance and watchful care of God over the creation was degraded into the likeness of a dog. Hor. i. 39. Nay, even the filthy beetle of Egypt must be fed and worshipped in the shrines of magnificent temples as the living impersonation of Ptha, the fertilizing energy of the Creator. Id. i. 12. The reasons they give for it are really too absurd for repetition.

By the help of gross follies like these, every god in the Egyptian Pantheon was assimilated to some form in the brute creation, which, as his living representative, was enshrined and worshipped in the temples dedicated to him. The philosophical defences of this idolatry, which appear in the Greek authors, are evidently of the school of Alex-

andria, where the Egyptian mythology first met with the Greek philosophy. They are mere colourable pleas, such as —that they held it a mark of greater respect to worship their gods under a living than an inanimate image.*

We cannot forbear pointing out the singular identity, in principle, of this error, with that which, in more modern times, has been shown by some nominal professors of Christianity. All idolatry would seem to consist originally in substituting for the truth mere symbols or metaphorical allusions. In ancient times, as in the flagrant case before us, men corrupted the truth by setting forth certain statues, pictures, or animals, as the representatives of God, and, therefore, as the proper objects of faith and worship conjointly with God. Upon similar principles is Christianity corrupted, when external rites are substituted for the truth as it is in Jesus.

The existing remains of Egyptian antiquity abundantly show the correctness of the accounts given in the Greek authors. Every divinity is symbolized by some animal, or is represented as having the head of some animal; a peculiarity which has also been noticed by Porphyry. *Ubi supra.*

It is in this manner that the great Creator is symbolized by a ram, and his statues and pictures have the head of that animal, who was called Amoun-neu, or Chnumis, , or . His representation is described by Eusebius (Præparatio, 3, 12) exactly as it occurs on monuments still in existence. His flesh is of a dark blue colour; he has a

* Plut. de Isid. Porphyry de Abstinen. lib. 4, cc. 9, 10. Clement of Alexandria commends the Egyptians for their animal worship. Their gods, at any rate, had much better *morals* than those of the Greeks, Προτρεπτικος. p. 62. This is, of course, in jest.

sceptre, a girdle, and a rich head-dress. A modification of Amoun is also represented by a ram.

Amoun.

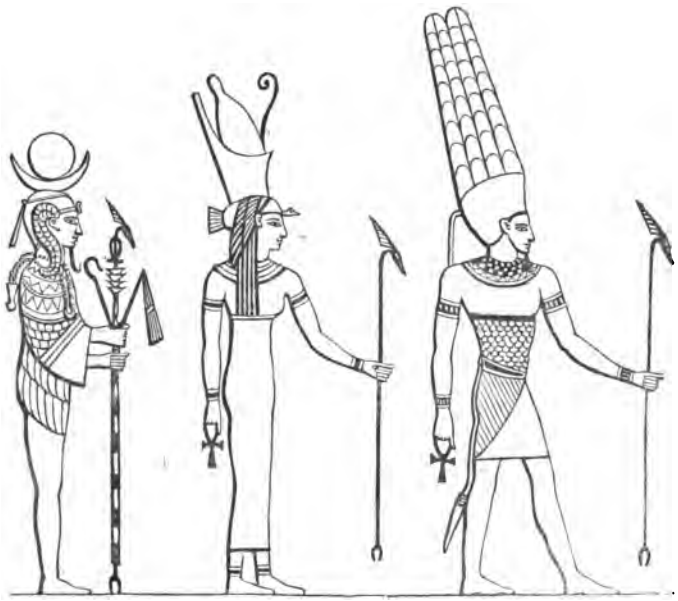
The Egyptians personified the vengeance of God under the form of a crocodile, or by an idol having the head of

Sevek-ra.

that reptile. He was named Sevek-ra, or Souk-ra, . It will not fail to be observed that there are hidden links which connect together Amoun-ra, Amoun-neu, and Sevek-ra: while to the vulgar they were set forth as three different idols, to the priesthood and the initiated they conveyed the idea of three manifestations or attributes of the same being. We might proceed throughout the entire Pantheon, showing the sense in which these many-formed monsters were, nevertheless, known and apprehended to be one. This mythology was a circle emanating from, included by, and centering in Amoun. By devices like these the truth of the unity of God (upon which this system of idolatry was evidently built) was nevertheless concealed from the vulgar.

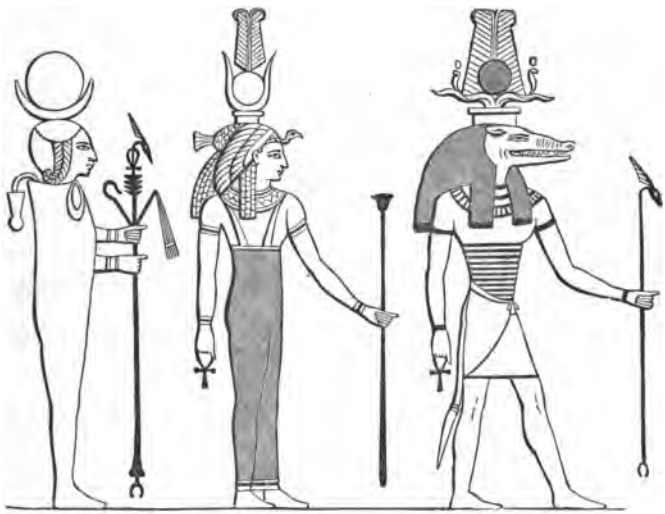
But this was by no means the extent of knowledge regarding the Divine nature and mode of existence. The careful study of the remains of their temples and other monuments of devotion, shows that the framers of the Egyptian mythology were acquainted with the mysterious truth which is revealed in the Bible of the triple existence of God. We quote the words in which Champollion explains this extraordinary discovery. "A new generation of gods appears on the walls of the temple of Calabshe in Nubia, which completes the circle of the forms of Amoun, from whom all the divine essences issue, and in whom they all meet. Amoun-ra, the Being, supreme, primordial, and self-produced, is entitled the husband of his mother, the goddess Mout, that is, the mother; or, in other words, his female-half, which is also one with himself, and he is frequently so represented. All the other gods of Egypt are but modifications of these two forms, taken separately; regarded under another aspect, they are but pure abstrac-

tions of the Supreme Being. The primary form, or antitype, of the entire mythology, is a triad of divinities, com-



posed of Amoun the father, Mout the mother, and Chons the infant son. This triad passes through an immense number of intermediate triads, until it reaches the earth, where, under the forms of Osiris , Isis , and Horus , it becomes incarnate. But a curious device exhibits the unity and identity of the whole of this circle of monadic triads. Horus, the lowest link, returns upwards under a new emanation, Amoun-Hor, and assumes the Amonian title, husband of his mother. Isis is blended with Mout , and their son Malouli is invested with attributes of Chons, the infant son, in the first triad."—*Lettres d'Egypte*, 156.

The triads intermediate to these two extremes presided over, and were worshipped in the several nomes or provinces into which Egypt was anciently divided. Sevek-ra



, Hathor, the Egyptian Venus , and Chons-Hor form the triple divinity of the Ombitic nome, p. 173. That of the nome of Edfou, or Apollinopolis, was Har-hat, (the thrice great Hermes,) Hathor and Har-sontho, (Horus, the sustainer of the world,) p. 192. The triad adored at Esne was Kneph, Neith, and the young god Hake under the form of an infant, p. 202. At Hermonthis as Monthou, Ritho, and Harphre. While at Thebes, the ecclesiastical capital of Egypt, the deity manifested himself under his primary and proper form of Amon-ra, Neith, and Chons. Thus each of the nomes into which Egypt was divided had its own religion, and worshipped the three parts of the Divine Being under different forms and names, p. 375.

It does not appear probable that men, to whom the doctrine of the tri-unity of God was unknown, could have framed such a system as this: their purpose appears to have been to hide that truth, so that it should not be lost; but yet to conceal it from the many. We readily grant that it is exceedingly debased and corrupted; that it is mixed up with much that is sensual, and gross, and human, "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man:" but still this does not vitiate the extraordinary fact, that the inventors of this most ancient superstition, which we know from the combined testimony of the Scriptures and the remaining monuments must have been in existence in the times of Abraham, were aware that the one God exists in three persons.

This is too important a subject to be passed over without a close examination of the mode in which the true doctrine has been disguised and corrupted in this mythology. The Deity is presented in it under the figure of man, of mere man. At first, he is a perfect monad, having all possible relations of his kind, male, female, father, mother, son, in himself. But by an act of spontaneity as God, that which is male is separated from that which is female, and becomes manifested as two distinct persons. This notion is, perhaps, of all others the least likely to be originated by the human mind, because it supposes an anomaly to which the entire range of creation affords no present parallel. Were we only acquainted with it as a fable of the Egyptian mythology, it might be pointed out as one of the most remarkable departures from the natural and the probable that is to be found in the whole system. While, on the other hand, should any statement be made elsewhere, and of an earlier date, detailing

a corresponding anomaly, it is improbable that the two traditions should not have a common origin.

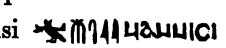
There is, however, such a relation in the Bible, with which the earliest inhabitants of the world were acquainted, because it was connected with Adam, the progenitor of the human race. It seems, therefore, a reasonable conclusion, that this fable of Amoun the Egyptian monad is an accommodation or perversion of the inspired narrative of Adam before the creation of Eve, Gen. ii. 20—24, which has been mingled up with their theogony by that confusion of God with man which runs through the whole system.

The circumstance that the second person of the Egyptian triad is always described as a female, is a remarkable point which we notice, without presuming at all to trespass beyond the exact letter of that which is written. The female impersonation of Wisdom in the book of Proverbs, ch. i.—ix., is a remarkable circumstance in this connexion.

We also discover another remarkable point, presented, like the rest, under a debased and carnal figure, in the circumstance, that the third person in the Egyptian triad is described as the offspring of the other two.

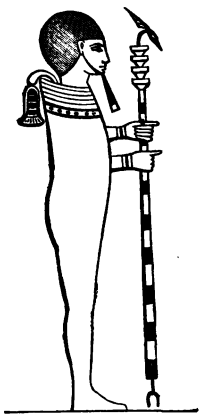
The number of these coincidences is, of course, the important part of our present investigation. Each of them separately would prove nothing, or next to nothing. The uniformity of their occurrence is the circumstance which gives them weight and value in the argument. It is on this account that we proceed with the subject, taking for our guide that which God has been pleased to reveal to us in the Bible respecting his own nature. We shall still find

the same evidence that the truth was concealed in this Egyptian superstition.

A small edifice was erected by the side of every temple, the entrance to which was through the adytum, or sanctuary; so that it was, in the estimation of the people, the holy of holies, the perfection, or crowning mystery of the entire worship. This is termed in the hieroglyphic inscriptions Ma-emmisi  "the birth-place." Like every other part of the temple it is covered with reliefs and paintings, in which are detailed the particulars of the birth of the third person of the triad, to which the temple is dedicated. The mother is attended by all the principal female divinities, and the infant god is afterwards presented to the superior forms of Amoun. We may here notice that, as the first person of the triad is very frequently in the sculptures on the walls of the temples represented with the countenance and figure of the Pharaoh who had erected it, and the second person with those of his queen, so also on the Ma-emmisi, the birth of the young god is, in the same curious manner, connected and identified with the birth of the founder or his first-born son. Thus, the birth-place of the Palace of Luxor commemorates at once the birth of the god Chonsis, and of Amenophis Memnon, by whom the principal part of that stupendous edifice was erected. In the temple at Hormonthis is a representation of the birth of the god Harphre, the son of Mandou and Ritho, who together form the triad of the nome, and also of Ptolemy Cæsarion, the son of Julius Cesar, and of Cleopatra, the wife of Ptolemy Auletes. The great hope and end, therefore, which this superstition held forth to its votaries as the consummation of their religion was the birth of a god; this their expectation being evidently

not metaphorical but real, because they always identified it with actual occurrences. We will now endeavour to ascertain the nature of this divinity, whose birth is made thus all-important in the Egyptian mythology.

According to Eusebius, *Præparatio*, lib. iii. c. 11, the first creative act was the issuing of an egg from the mouth of Amoun Chnouphis while a monad, that is, before the separation of his male and female halves. This egg produced a deity whom they named Ptha, and the Greeks Hephæstus. He was distinguished by a dress which



Ptha.

enveloped both his feet, like the winding sheet of a dead body. Such a divinity is of not infrequent occurrence on the existing monuments; his name is written which contains the consonants of the Greek transcription of the name *φθα*.

According to their mythology, Ptha was the creative agent of the universe, the divine intelligence, who, at the

beginning, was sent forth by the Supreme Being to create all things; he was also honoured as the inventor of philosophy. He was the primordial form of the third part of the grand triad. If we follow him through his first emanation or descent in the Theban triad, Amoun, Neith, and Chonsis, we find him with the same dress and symbols,

Chonsis.

but with a thick lock of hair platted over the right ear, which was part of the costume of royal youths in Egypt. His head is surmounted by an ornament representing two of the phases of the moon, the crescent and the gibbous moon, denoting that in this his first transfiguration or descent to the god Chonsis, Ptha acquires a mythological relation with that luminary. From this point the primordial essence Ptha descends downwards, as we have seen, to his divine incarnation on earth in Horus. He also descends to his lunar incarnation in the lower region of heaven, as the moon, through a series of inferior or secondary deities, which

nowhere form part of a triad; commencing with ΙΟΒΘΩΟΥΤ Ioh-Thoth, that is, Thoth, or Hermes, in relation to the moon; and reaching incarnation in the form of the twice great Hermes, or Thoth, the conductor of souls, the attendant and counsellor of Osiris. Both these forms, as well as their intermediate ones, are represented with the head of the ibis, which,

Ioh Thoth.

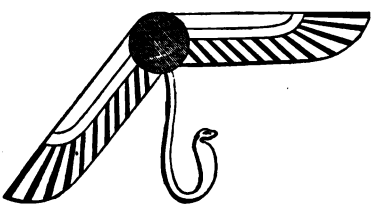
Thoth.

as we have already noticed, is an emblem of the moon. In his final incarnation, he is said by the Greek authors to have taught mankind all the arts that distinguish them from the brutes that perish, beginning with that of speaking, and proceeding with writing, the practice of religion, numbers, geometry, music, painting, sculpture, weights, measures, and money. The ibis-headed Thoth, or twice great Hermes, was the impersonation of human wisdom; and though under this transfiguration he stood in mythology in the secondary rank of deities, yet he always remained a direct emanation from, and part of Ptha, the first-born of the

primæval deity. And by a very singular series of reliefs, which were discovered in the temple of Dakkeh, in Nubia, by Champollion, we find Thoth again ascending to heaven

Meni.

through three intermediate forms, the last of which is , wisdom, light, splendour, λογος; again to be absorbed in the supreme and one God, under his loftiest manifestation of Har-hat , the thrice great Hermes, the celestial sun; or, in other words, the wisdom of God.—*Lettres*, 150.



Har-hat, the celestial sun.

This most ancient mythology, therefore, as described by authors who lived before the Christian era, and as set forth on the walls of the temples in which its ritual of worship was performed, was taught to the initiated and concealed from the vulgar, that God created all things at the first by the primary emanation from himself, his first-born, who was the author and the giver of all wisdom and of all knowledge, in heaven and on earth, being at the same time the wisdom and the word of God. The birth of this great and all-powerful being, his manifestation as an infant, his nurture and education through the succeeding periods of childhood and of boyhood, constituted the grand mystery of the entire system; and more extraordinary than all, he also undergoes a succession of births through a descending series of emanations which, harmonizing perfectly with the doctrine of metempsychosis, so well known to be peculiar to the Egyptian priesthood, conveys, by a metaphor not to be mistaken, their persuasion that this same august being would at some time become incarnate, and be born upon earth as an infant. To remove all doubt as to the reality of this their expectation, they have, in several extant instances, made his birth identical with that of the royal founder of the temple, or of his son and heir.

This superstition was framed to debase the facts regarding religion with which its devisers were acquainted, by concealing them under allegories, which were embodied and presented to its votaries as the proper objects of their adoration; thus deluding them into worshipping and serving visible objects rather than the Creator.

The account of the knowledge possessed by the authors of this idolatry has been taken from heathen writers, who lived

before the Christian era, and from the inscriptions and paintings on the walls of the temples which had been dedicated to its idols; so that the sources whence it is derived are perfectly free from suspicion.

It is a common, but very palpable mistake, to imagine that the short account of the patriarchal times which commences the Old Testament embodies all that was known of true religion in those days: this is contrary to the tenor of the inspired narrative, which speaks of some communications between God and man, of which it has given us no account; it was written many ages afterwards, primarily for the use of the children of Israel, and introduces the minute details of a religion of rites and ceremonies which was to replace the ritual of the patriarchs. So that there was neither the necessity for, nor the opportunity of dwelling upon the particulars of the older form which was about to be abolished, or of recording the full extent of the knowledge relative to divine things possessed by those to whom it had been communicated. God, who had imparted the patriarchal dispensation, was about to replace it with another, which was to convey Divine knowledge, primarily in types and figures, and ultimately in fulfilment and reality, to the whole extent to which mankind required it. When, therefore, it is supposed that the portion of Holy Writ which treats of the antediluvian and patriarchal times contains a full account of the rites and doctrines of the known religion, there is an entire mistake of its intention. Some account it a whole in itself, whereas it is really but a small part of the whole. It is merely the introductory chapter to the complete revelation. The first eleven chapters of Genesis contain the whole inspired record of the events of 2000

years. It is therefore perfectly comprehensible that the Scripture account of the patriarchs should by no means detail all that was then known of true religion; but we cannot understand how mankind could at any time have believed unto righteousness without some knowledge of the scheme of salvation which is set forth in the Bible as the object of their faith. It is written regarding many individuals, both before and after the flood, that they were the children of God, that they walked with God, that they were the friends of God. The same authority also informs us that these were all originally inheritors of the corruption of our common parents; that they were by nature dead in trespasses and sins; and that every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts had been once only evil continually. What, then, produced this holy change in them? Whence were the new principles derived which now actuated them? The same unerring authority answers this question also. By the grace of God, through faith in Christ, who was hereafter to die for sinners, and to be raised from the dead, and by that alone, can they who are dead in trespasses and sins have been quickened at any time; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, nor could they have believed in him of whom they had not heard. It appears, therefore, that the knowledge of divine things, which we discover in so unexpected a quarter that mankind really did possess in the patriarchal times, is no more than the Scripture account necessarily supposes them to have possessed; for otherwise they must have believed without knowing wherein they believed, which is in itself a contradiction.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE FUTURE STATE.

AMONG a certain class of divines it was once a matter of considerable doubt whether the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was known to the patriarchs; or even whether it was at all revealed under the Old Testament dispensation. As for the strong arguments in favour of this truth to be found in the Greek authors, they were inclined to regard them as surmises, not as deductions from any traditive knowledge which might have reached them. The only effective disclosure to man on this momentous point was, according to their doctrine, to be ascribed to the more perfect revelation of Christianity. Such, however, was not the fact. The more accurate knowledge which the researches of the last fifty years in the antiquities of early nations have elicited, corroborates the strong evidence that already existed on this subject. The inhabitants of Egypt were familiar with the doctrine that the soul of man was immortal; and that endless misery awaited the wicked, and eternal rewards the righteous, in a future state. These truths formed an essential part of their religious system in the times of Abraham; and we cannot suppose that he who 'was called the friend of God" would be left in greater

ignorance of truths so precious and important than those who had grievously departed from and perverted the doctrine which had been delivered to them.

The system of metaphors, by which the fact of the separate existence of the soul was set forth, was, like every other part of the Egyptian mythology, coarse and earthy, though expressive and significant. The separate spirit was denoted in hieroglyphics by a hawk having a human head. See Horapollo, i. 7. That such is its meaning the group with which it is always combined shows very evidently. It reads , which, according to Horapollo in the same passage, is the Egyptian for soul. It is also evident in one of the decorations of the long papyrus, which represents the deceased, for whose benefit it had been transcribed in the article of death. His soul flies away under this form, bearing in its claws the symbols of divine life and transmigration.

Hieroglyphic of the separate spirit.

The long papyrus is a collection of devotional services, written on behalf of the deceased person, and deposited in his tomb. It is entitled, "The Book of manifestations to light."

The prayers of which it consists are intended to benefit the soul of the deceased in the various situations and adventures, both with gods and monsters, through which they supposed it had to pass after death before it reached the invisible world.

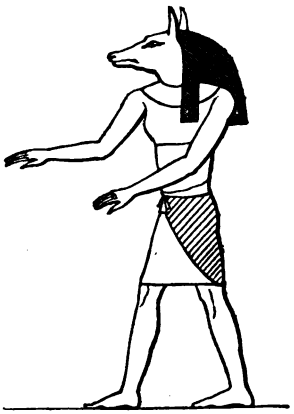
These adventures are detailed in the text, and are also graphically depicted in the illuminations which appear in the more carefully written copies. Before describing them, it will be needful to notice another peculiarity of this mythic system. The gross manner in which God and man are confounded in it has already been noticed. With a corresponding coarseness of conception the Egyptians also confused heaven and earth, (or rather Egypt,) and hades.

The heaven described was merely a celestial Egypt, illuminated by a celestial sun, Har-hat, fertilized by a celestial Nile, Nen-moou, divided into the same nomes, each of which was the dwelling-place and demesne of the god that was worshipped in the corresponding nome of Egypt. They had also the same notion regarding the place of separate spirits, which they supposed to be towards the west quarter of the world, and on that account named Amenti,  (from ϵⲓⲙⲉⲛⲧ, west,) Their hades had also a sun, a Nile, and nomes, the reflections

of those of the material Egypt. So gross was their state of moral darkness that to this extent was every article of their belief sensualized.

The "Book of manifestations" commences with the death of the deceased; and the ceremonies and prayers which accompanied the various processes of embalming and swathing the body, and transporting it to the tomb.

It first represents Osiris, the king of Amenti, surnamed Onnofre, that is, "the revealer of blessings," seated on a throne, in a shrine richly decorated, and receiving the abundant offerings of the deceased and his immediate relatives. This seems to represent an act preparatory to death, and intended to propitiate the stern inexorable judge before whose judgment-seat he who made the offering was shortly to appear. It is the only scene which takes place before the death of the deceased. That event follows immediately; and then a long series of figures and groups depict the solemnities observed at his embalmment and funeral. The body is often accompanied to the grave by a train of females, weeping and lamenting, and by his relatives, attired in mourning habits. The mummy, stretched upon a bier, is placed on a sacred bark; which, in some copies, is rowed along the Nile, in others is drawn on a sledge by four oxen. Another boat follows, drawn or carried by four men, and having in it the funeral urns, (see Chapter v. p. 112,) wherein the viscera of the deceased were embalmed separately. At the head and feet of the deceased stand the sister goddesses, Isis and Nepthys , the daughters of the sun; and, according to Plutarch, the symbols of the two principles which are then contending for the body, Perpetuity and Corruption. The god Anubis, with the head of a dog, takes



Anubis.

possession of the coffin, and Osiris accompanies the procession. It is not very certain whether by these divinities we are to understand the gods themselves, or a mere masquerade of priests, attired with their insignia. The last scene on earth, and of the first part of the ritual, represents the tomb, in which the mummy is deposited after the friends and relatives of the deceased have once more lamented over, and taken their final leave of it. The adventures of the soul commence with the second part. Resuming its earthly form in some transcriptions, in others retaining that of a soul, the disembodied spirit enters the regions beneath the earth, to which, in the popular belief, the tomb is the actual entrance, and is represented making offerings and prayers to the various divinities, sacred animals, and monsters through whose territories in the infernal world it must pass in its progress to the judgment-seat of Osiris, in the palace of Amenti. These divinities differ somewhat in different transcriptions. They were probably the tutelary gods of

the deceased. One or two instances may, perhaps, not be unacceptable. In a very beautiful copy of the ritual at the Louvre, which was written in favour of the scribe of justice, Neboten, the deceased, clothed in white, adores successively the genii of the eight regions of Hermes, the genii of the east, the sacred birds Ben and Gen, the soul of Atmou under the form of a ram, the god Ptha in his shrine, and several sacred animals and symbols. In the long transcription which has been published by the French commission, and which is now in the Bibliotheque du Roi, the deceased, Petamon, is represented worshipping the soul of Thoré, the beetle, the swallow upon the solar mountain, the guardian of the gates of the pool of fire, the goddess Netphe, or Rhea, in the form of a serpent, accompanied by another divinity having the head of a crocodile, and the bird Ben.

In another MS. in the same collection, the deceased, Amenhem, addresses a prayer to the god of light coming from heaven, whose eyes enlighten the material world, and dissipate the darkness of night. The picture which accompanies it represents many souls and men adoring a luminous disc. He next prays to Phre, the great god, manifested in the two firmaments under his two forms of Re, the rising sun, and Atmou the setting sun: then again to Phre and Thoth, as gods of the sun and moon. Afterwards he invokes Netphe, the great mother of the gods; by whose bent body covered with stars all space was circumscribed: she was the impersonation of heaven. The bark of the sun is represented sailing thereon, under the guidance of Moui, or light. His next petitions are presented to Osiris, the lord

of Totou, the region of stability: the emblems of this divinity, and those of the ibis-headed Thoth, are enclosed in a serpent biting its own tail, the symbol of eternity. Afterwards he prays to all the divinities presiding over the judgment of souls, and concludes with short ejaculations to Osiris, Nofre Tmou, and the sacred cow of Hathor, or Venus.

There is a fine transcription of the ritual in the British Museum,* in which the deceased dedicates his heart to his mother and his ancestors, immediately after his adoration of the god Ptah.

The second part of the ritual consists of eleven liturgical prayers to Thoth, the guide of souls, and, as we have already said, the impersonation of the Divine wisdom. The soul implores this divinity to undertake for him to cast down his enemies, to plead his cause with the gods of the various regions through which he has to travel, and finally to open for him the gates of the great hall of judgment, that he may pass through them in safety.

This formidable array of gods and monsters, however, was but introductory to the still more fearful ordeal that awaited the soul on its arrival at the terrible portal of the judgment hall, where all the actions of its life while in the body were examined. This scene is by no means confined to the ritual we are now considering. Its frequent occurrence on mummy-cases, votive tablets, boxes, and funeral remains of every description, sufficiently attest the very high importance that was attached to it by the Egyptians, and the conspicuous place that it occupied in their creed.

* Anastasy, No. 35.

Many of these pictures are much curtailed and abbreviated, according to the custom of the scribes on all occasions. In the most perfect of them the deceased is represented standing immediately before the entrance of a vast hall in the attitude of supplication, and addressing a long prayer to the divinity who presides in it, Osiris, the supreme judge. He has for his assessors the two goddesses who are both named Thmei, (the Themis of the Greeks.) They probably were impersonations of justice and truth. The first of them, who was called the Themis of the left, because she occupied the left side of the hall, was the president over the first twenty-one avengers, the lower row of figures in the engraving on p. 158: the other, the Themis of the right, had the charge of the remainder of the forty-two demons by whom the wicked were hereafter to be tormented. The prayer to Osiris at the entrance of the hall reads thus:—"O thou avenger, lord of justice, great god, lord of the two Themes, (justice and truth,) I worship thee, O my lord. I have spoken, speak thou to me thy name: tell me the names of the forty-two gods who are with thee in the great hall of justice and truth, living guardians of the wicked, fed with their blood: bring forward my righteousnesses, search out my sins." The deceased then proceeds to enumerate the moral offences of which he has not been guilty:—"I have defrauded no man: I have not slaughtered the cattle of the gods, I have not prevaricated at the seat of justice, I have not made slaves of the Egyptians, I have not defiled my conscience for the sake of my superior, I have not used violence, I have not famished my household, I have not made to weep, I have not smitten privily, I have not changed the measures of Egypt, I have

not grieved the spirits of the gods, I have not committed adultery, I have not forged signet rings, I have not falsified the weights of the balance, I have not withheld milk from the mouths of my children." The offences that follow are peculiar to the climate and to the idolatry of Egypt. "I have not pierced the banks of the Nile in its annual increase, I have not separated to myself an arm of the Nile in its advance." These passages render it probable that in ancient as in modern times, an important part of the revenue of Egypt was raised by imposing a tribute upon the lands overflowed by the annual inundation; so that to obtain any portion of these fertilizing waters secretly was to defraud the state. This singular disavowal concludes thus: "I have not disturbed the gazelles of the gods in their pasturage, I have not netted the waterfowl of the gods, I have not caught the sacred fishes." It may be inferred from this and other passages, that there were parks or preserves around the Egyptian temples, where the sacred animals were kept; and that it was sacrilege to take them. "I have not despised the gods in their offerings;" in other words, "I have not offered to the gods that which is imperfect," I have not bound the cattle of the gods, I have not pierced the god in his manifestation," as a sacred animal. The prayer concludes with petitions for purification and illumination.

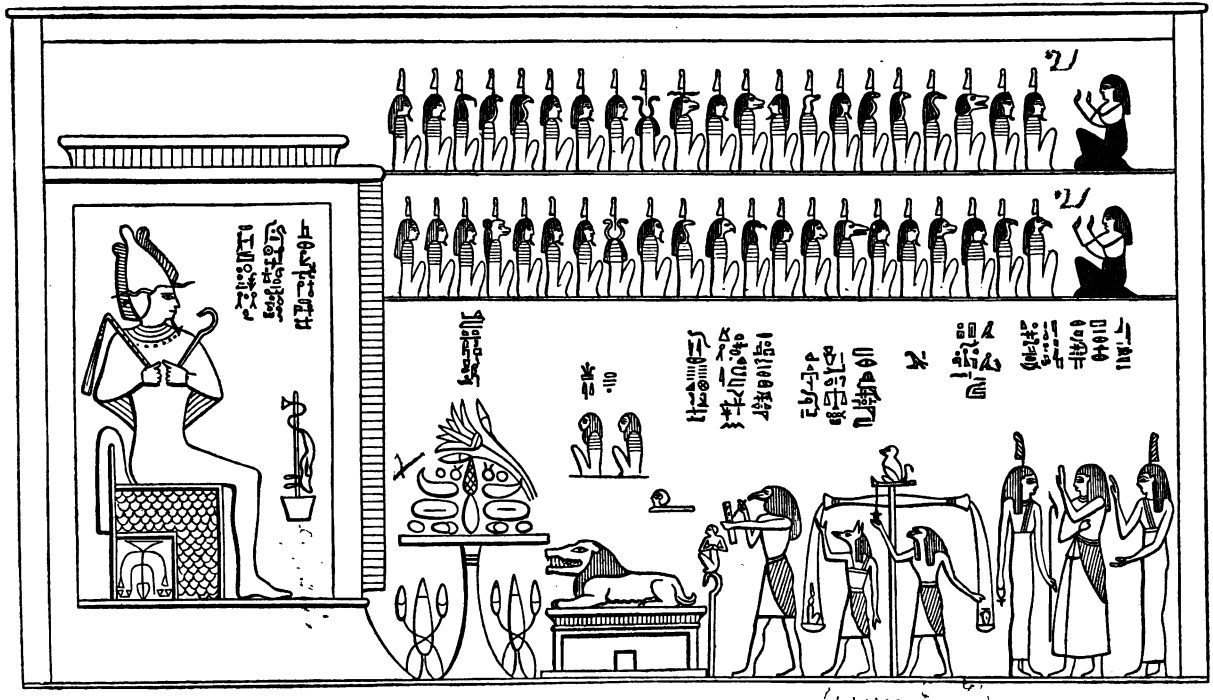
The deceased then entered the great hall of judgment, and, kneeling before the forty-two avengers, protested to each his innocence of the sin of which he was the minister of vengeance. The names of these terrible beings are descriptive of their appearance or qualities. The soul says to the first of them, "O thou that hast long legs, (art swift to pursue,) I have not sinned." To the second, "O thou that

dost try with fire, I have not been gluttonous." To the fourth, "O thou that devourest tranquillity, (that is, with whom there is no peace,) I have not stolen." To the fifth, "O thou that smitest the heart, I have done no murder." To the sixth, "O thou with the two lions, (heads,) I have not falsified measures." To the seventh, "O thou that hast piercing eyes, I have not acted the hypocrite." To the ninth, "O thou that dost make limbs to tremble, I have not lied." To the sixteenth, "O thou that dost delight in blood, I have not slain the cattle of the gods." To the twenty-second, "O thou that dost consume creation, I have not been drunken." The foregoing may suffice as specimens of what has generally been termed the negative confession. Some parts of it remain still in much obscurity as to their import; others allude to offences of which it is a shame even to speak.* The declaration of the apostle regarding the ancient world was perfectly true, "They knew the judgment of God, that they who did such things were worthy of death."

The perusal of this most ancient code of morals accords with the inspired declaration, that the heathen of old were a law unto themselves. The moral law of God, which was written on their hearts, evidently embraced the entire compass of the duties of social relation? Or who shall dare to charge God foolishly, in that the heathen who sinned without the law of Moses also perished without it?

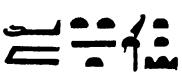
The judgment hall in which this great scene occurs, which terminates the third section of the ritual, is the palace

* The author has to express his deep obligations to Samuel Birch, Esq., the senior assistant of the British Museum, for the kind and very efficient aid afforded him in these translations.



The Judgment-hall of Osiris.

of Osiris, the supreme judge of souls. It is situated in Amenti, the west. The god himself appears to the left of the picture. He is enthroned on a magnificent shrine, and wears a head-dress composed of the upper part of the diadem

called Sent, which denotes dominion in the upper region, that is, in heaven; it is adorned with two ostrich feathers, (the symbols of justice,) and with the disc of the sun, and the horns of a goat, signifying light and fertility. He has in his hands a scourge, and a sceptre bent at one end in the form of a crook, the symbol of dominion. This, as the accompanying legend informs us, is Osiris, , the very beneficent , the lord of life , the great god , the eternal mediator , president of Amenti , and eternal king, king of many days . Immediately before the throne, and within the shrine, is a kind of stand, upon which is hung the skin of a panther: the meaning of this is unknown. An altar stands in front of the shrine laden with offerings, consisting of flowers, fruit, bread, and flesh, with wine and milk in vases; probably representing the acts of piety performed on behalf of the deceased by his surviving relatives. On a pedestal in the immediate vicinity of the throne a monster reposes, having the paws of a lion, the body of a female hippopotamus, and the head of a crocodile. Her name, "the devourer of Amenti,"  as well as her appearance, at once point her out as another of the ministers of vengeance executing the judgments of the divinity before whom she crouches.

At the opposite extremity of the picture, to the right, is

a group of three persons. That in the centre is clothed in the ordinary manner of the Egyptians, and presented by one of his companions, a female wearing an ostrich feather in her hair, to the other, also a female, similarly ornamented, and having the sceptre of tranquillity and the symbol of life in her hands. This group represents the soul of the deceased introduced by the two Themeis (representing the two attributes they impersonate, truth and justice) to the bar of the judge of all things. It was their office to receive the souls of the deceased on their appearance before his tribunal. They were also the presidents of the forty-two avengers, who are represented on the upper part of the picture, seated in two rows, to both of which the deceased offers supplications. The heads of these judges vary considerably; some have the human form, others the heads of living creatures, such as the crocodile, snake, ram, hawk, ibis, jackal, hippopotamus, lion, and ape. We have seen that they are the ministers of vengeance, whose wrath is to be deprecated by the deceased. The names of all the forty-two, and the particular regions over which they preside, occur in the entire copies of this scene. In other copies, they are represented sitting before their presidents. In the presence of the judge Osiris, these and other divinities, or genii, rigorously examined the conduct of the soul while incarnate upon earth. The motives thereof, most significantly symbolized by his heart, are placed in the huge balance of Amenti, which occupies the centre of the picture; and in the opposite scale appears the image of Thmei, or the ostrich feather that adorns her head-dress, (the symbol of justice or truth,) indicative of the inexorable nature of the scrutiny which is taking place. One of the ministers of Thoth, in

the form of a baboon, whose name is Hap, (sentence, judgment,) sits on the stand that supports the balance, and the instrument is attended by Horus the hawk-headed, the beloved son of Osiris and Isis, who steadies the scale in which the heart is placed, and at the same time closely observes the index of the balance. The opposite scale is trimmed by Anubis with the dog's head, the son of Osiris and Nephthys, who declares the result of the scrutiny to the ibis-headed Thoth, the divine wisdom. He stands with his writing tablet and pen immediately in front of Osiris, the supreme judge of this fearful assize; and, as clerk of the court, writes down the sentence in his presence. This sentence was full of joy to the good, and of woe to the wicked. They who by the faithful discharge of all their moral obligations as children, as parents, as masters or servants, as kings or subjects, and by the conscientious avoidance of vice under all its grosser forms, had been enabled to pass the ordeal, were permitted to pass through the hall of the Thmeis. Whence, embarking on the infernal Nile, they are privileged to behold once more the disc of the sun, a blessing for which the gods are very frequently supplicated on behalf of the deceased. With that luminary it would seem that they arose to heaven, and in his bark they navigated the celestial Nile, or primordial ether. At the fifth hour they were landed in the habitations of blessedness, where they rested from their labours. Here they reap the corn, and gather the fruits of paradise, under the eye and smile of the lord of joy in the heart, that is, the sun, who exhorts them thus:—"Take your sickles, reap your grain, carry it into your dwellings, that ye may be glad therewith, and present it as a pure offering unto God." There also they bathe in the pure river

of the water of life that flows past their habitation. Over them is inscribed, "They have found favour in the eyes of the great God; they inhabit the mansions of glory, where they enjoy the life of heaven; the bodies which they have abandoned shall repose for ever in their tombs, while they rejoice in the presence of the supreme God."

But a terrible fate impended over those who, being weighed in the balance of Amenti, were found wanting. In the first instance, their souls were driven back to earth again by ministers of vengeance in the form of baboons, to transmigrate into that animal to which their besetting sin had assimilated them. The glutton, driven from the tribunal with heavy blows, became a hog; the cruel man a wolf, etc.

But if, after three transmigrations, the soul still remained polluted, its hope perished for ever; and it was transported to the regions of darkness and eternal death, symbolized by the twelve hours of the night, and the lower hemisphere. God, under the symbol of the sun, is present here also; but as the avenger and tormentor he makes the darkness his pavilion; his disc is black; no ray of light issues from him to illume their cheerless abodes. His object in visiting them is to superintend and preside over the punishments endured by the wicked in the seventy-five zones into which the lower hemisphere was divided. Each zone has an attendant spirit attached to it, who is also the executioner. In one of the zones, the lost souls are bound to stakes, covered with wounds, which their executioners are still inflicting, brandishing their bloody swords, and at the same time reproaching them with the crimes they have committed while on earth. In another, they are suspended with the

head downwards: elsewhere they walk in long and melancholy procession, with their hands bound across their breasts, and their heads nearly severed from their bodies; or with their hands tied tightly behind their backs, and their hearts torn from their bosoms, and dragging after them on the ground. In other zones, souls in the form they bore when on earth, or in that of a hawk or crane, are plunged into boiling cauldrons, along with the symbol of divine felicity, the fan, which they have forfeited for ever. In the great representation of these fearful scenes, which is repeated in many of the tombs of the kings, the offences for which they endure these torments are specified over each zone; and it is declared concerning all the inhabitants of these abodes of misery, "These souls are at enmity with our god, and do not see the rays which issue from his disc; they are no longer permitted to live in the terrestrial world, neither do they hear the voice of God when he traverses their zone."

While giving this description of the mythology of the Egyptians, which is mixed up with the grossest follies, we yet notice truths that are the groundwork of these inventions, which are far too precious to be destroyed even by the coarse and tasteless fictions with which they are combined. The religion, then, of the Egyptians, the most ancient nation in the world, has been investigated on the very walls of the temples and monuments that were erected for the celebration of its worship. Its divinity recognises the doctrine of a Trinity, and the hope of a future incarnation of God. Its ethics rest upon the tenet of the immortality of the soul of man; upon his responsibility to his Maker for his deeds on earth; and upon his appearance after death at his judgment-

seat: and also upon the infinitely important truth, that God himself is the exceeding great reward of the righteous, and will surely punish the wicked; that his favour is everlasting life, that his wrath is death eternal.

These results throw light upon an obscure and remote portion of the history of the ways of God to man, which may sometimes minister consolation to the weak and feeble believer in the hour of darkness and perplexity, and wherein the confirmed faith of the more advanced Christian need not disdain to rejoice. To be able to show to the gainsayer that the truth was partly holden in the fables of ancient heathenism, as well as revealed to the saints of old, is surely well calculated to dissipate the doubts that are sometimes suggested respecting the periods at which God was pleased to impart the revelation of his will to mankind, and his mode of dealing with those who lived before his written word was inspired. We know, upon the most unquestionable of all possible evidence, contemporary inscriptions, that long before a written revelation was possessed, man was conscious that he had within him a soul that cannot die; that after the death of the body that soul must appear before the bar of God, and be judged concerning the deeds of this life; and that infinite rewards and infinite punishments depended upon the issue of that trial. These, we conceive, are facts of importance, whether we be contending with unbelief in others, or in ourselves.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### TRACES OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF EGYPT.

THE early history of Egypt requires for its investigation the help of the same unerring guide, whose counsels have directed us hitherto, the word of God.

"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for morter. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did

the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth," Gen. xi. 1—9.

Of this sentence the children of Mizraim, the son of Ham, who, according to the same inspired record, were the first inhabitants of Egypt, Gen. x. 13, certainly partook. This is plain, not only from the tenor of the account itself, but from their language, which is very peculiar both in its words and structure.

But let us proceed to inquire if the mass of most ancient facts concerning Egypt which have been recently recovered from the examination of its remains, will not also supply some further evidence of the occurrence of the confusion of tongues, in addition to that of the peculiarity of the language, which is common to all other nations.

We premise that it is plainly inconsistent with the Scripture account both of the Divine attributes, and of God's ordinary mode of dealing with mankind, to assume that our first parents were driven forth to wander over the face of the earth like savages upon a waste. The inspired narrative of the first transactions in this sin-polluted world, the record of which is preserved to us, describes a different state of society. The whole family of man could not in the days of Cain and Abel, in the ordinary course of things, consist of any great multitude of persons. The curse of God was yet tingling in the ears of our first parents, and the thorns and the thistles which first started into existence at that awful voice, had but for a few summers expanded their flowers and shed their downy seeds to the winds, yet even then Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain was a tiller of the ground, Gen. iv. 2. Both these occupations are incompatible with a state of barbarism, and both existing together

the best proof that may be had of a civilized condition of society. Accordingly, soon afterwards we read of the progress of the useful and ornamental arts among mankind, Gen. iv. 20—22.

The statements of Scripture leave to the infidels who have originated it their utterly untenable and barren theory of Egypt or Ethiopia covered some myriads of years ago with a horde of speechless savages, gradually improving themselves through the long lapse of lazy-footed centuries until they had attained a pitch of civilization and refinement which enabled them to meet together and agree upon the sublime harmony of sounds and pictures, which constitutes the language of ancient Egypt. For, in spite of the constant repetition of such absurdities, we know that all analogy, as well as all Scripture, is against them. The savage never improves until he comes in contact with the civilized man. Left to himself, his race is always sinking to deeper degradation and final extinction. This is probably a rule without exception. The traditions of all savages are on this point in accordance with the Bible. They all tell of past days of greatness and prosperity, evidently meaning civilization. The savage state, then, is not one of nature, but of degradation; and it is in modern rather than in ancient times, that this deplorable consequence of the sin that is in man is to be looked for. The whole history of man since the creation has likewise taught us that, ignorant of the art of writing, he would soon become a savage; for we are not aware that a race of human beings entitled to be called civilized ever existed who were without it; and this consideration certainly renders it probable that in this art also man, in his primitive state, was *θεοδιδακτος*, taught of God. Another circumstance

greatly strengthens this probability. Though very widely diffused, writing is nevertheless an art which, when once lost, man never of himself recovers. No tribe of savages with which in modern times we have become acquainted has accomplished this; and we have proof that such recovery never was effected, in the fact, that all the alphabets in the world may be traced to one or two common originals, whence the forms of the letters have been modified in various ways during the lapse of ages. We may therefore infer, that what man during so long a period never has done, he never could have done at any time. It must be remembered, that the difficulty, in such cases, lies in the first suggestion; and how the idea of analyzing the sounds of the voice, and expressing the parts into which it was divided, either by arbitrary characters or by the representations of physical objects, ever could have occurred to any human being, is so improbable, that we naturally look to the Divine teaching, as presenting a far more reasonable solution of the difficulty. The very remote antiquity of this art should also be considered. Grant it to be just possible that the idea of an alphabet might have been suggested to some highly gifted individual of strong natural understanding, living at a period of high cultivation and intelligence, it is altogether incredible that this discovery should have been made in the primitive times, when the need of the art would be less pressing than at any other epoch. To this it may be added, that the unanimous voice of all heathen tradition ascribes the art of writing to the gods; which shows at the least a prevailing sense of the difficulty of supposing it to be a mere human invention.

The beautifully ingenious principle upon which the

phonetic or alphabetic system of the Egyptians was constructed, has already engaged our attention. We have endeavoured, in a former part of this volume, to explain that the picture of a physical object was made the sign of the sound with which its name commenced in the Egyptian language. It is now needful to state that this mode of constructing an alphabet did not originate in Egypt, nor is it peculiar to the hieroglyphic system of that country. The same principle is distinctly perceptible in the alphabets of the race of Shem. The ancient alphabets in use among the Hebrews and the nations allied to them are all constructed upon exactly the same principle. The names of the letters all commence with the sounds they severally signify, which are also the Hebrew names of visible objects. The resemblance to these objects is sufficiently traceable in the existing forms of many of the letters, to prove that they were originally pictures of them. We need only cast our eye over the following table in order to convince ourselves of this fact.

| Name of Letter. | Meaning. | Hebrew characters. | Samaritan. | Phœnician. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beth. | House. | ב | | |
| Gimel. | Camel. | ג | | |
| Daleth. | Door-post. | ד | |  |
| Jod. | Hand. | י | | |
| Gnain. | Eye. | ע | |  |
| Phe. | Mouth. | פ | | |
| Resh. | Head. | ר | |  |
| Shin. | Teeth. | ש | |  |

It will be observed that there is a traceable though not very marked resemblance between the form of ב and the outline of an oriental house with a flat roof; the letter ג also

retains some analogy to the form of a camel, whence its name is derived: the resemblance is more decided in the letter ד, which is evidently a door-post. In the last four, the remains of the original picture are sufficiently obvious.

The principle, therefore, which we have shown to be applied in the formation of alphabetic signs by the Egyptians, we now find to have been known and used also by a tribe of men inhabiting a country which the unanimous voice of all ancient authority declares to have been the cradle of the whole human race, after its destruction by the flood. It existed, therefore, among the descendants of Shem, and the descendants of Mizraim, the Egyptians, and was applied in the languages which were peculiar to them. Now it is highly improbable that either of these nations transmitted the art to the other; because in the many instances wherein this has occurred, it is the characters themselves that are transmitted, their names and forms, not the principle of their formation; and it is still more improbable, that a principle so curious and recondite should have been discovered in two nations independently of each other. Such a supposition is contradicted by all analogy and by all experience. These considerations lead us naturally to the conclusion that both races must have originally derived this principle from the same source; and this is the very conclusion to which our infallible guide has already directed us. "And the whole earth was of one speech and one language." The two were once members of the same community, which was not ignorant of the art of writing, for it would be a strange perversion of language to call the builders of the tower of Babel, savages; and they knew the common principle upon which the alphabets of both were constructed.

Another singular fact has also been established respecting the alphabets of these two neighbouring races. They constructed their alphabets on the same principle without borrowing from each other a single character or the name of a character, as seems to be universally the case in later transmissions of the art of writing from nation to nation; and yet the two people had from the remotest antiquity been in very close intercourse with each other. How is this anomaly to be accounted for? No conjecture, however ingenious, will furnish any satisfactory solution of it; but the word of God at once solves the difficulty. At Babel the Lord did confound the language of all the earth; and from thence did the Lord scatter men abroad upon the face of all the earth, Gen. xi. 9. That fearful expression of the wrath of God which fell at Babel upon the children of men, whereby their language was confounded, would seem to have been so far mitigated in the case of the descendants of Shem and of Mizraim that they still retained the recollection of the principle upon which the primitive alphabet had been constructed. This is in analogy with the rest of the dealings of Him who in wrath remembers mercy.

But let us proceed to inquire if we cannot discover some further traces of the curse of Babel.

The descendants of Shem were permitted to retain not only the principle upon which an alphabet was constructed, but its proper use as an alphabet. The Shemitic races have always written alphabetically. They were also permitted to take up their abode in countries not far removed from the scene of this terrible visitation, Gen. x. 21—24. These facts would seem to mark the commencement of the prophetic blessing which Noah, the second father of the human

family, pronounced upon his son Shem, the continuance of which is also the subject of the history of the Old Testament, and which was accomplished when our Lord Jesus Christ became incarnate in the form of a descendant of Shem. The Shemitic alphabets were the root whence all other alphabets were derived, and we have already given our reasons for thinking that God had long before taught to man an alphabetic system of writing.

The unhappy sons of Mizraim, the son of Ham, appear to have wandered forth from their habitations, disabled from any longer articulating the sounds of that which from the first had been the language of the whole human race; and also had erased from their memories all recollection of the meaning of that language.

Diodorus Siculus* and Plutarch† were informed by the Egyptian priests that when the twice great Thoth first came among mankind, they were not able to speak, but only uttered cries like brute animals: and however lightly we may be inclined to value such traditions, it is perhaps not assuming too much to say, that generally they are not without some foundation in fact. Now let the very peculiar structure of the language of ancient Egypt be taken into consideration. It appears that the language and the writings have formed and modified each other; the writing as often assisting the language, as the language the writing. It is a writing of pictures, expressing the ideas of a language of pictures. The roots of this language prove to be, according to the tradition, literally the cries of animals: every thing, as far as possible, being named from the sound pro-

* Hist. i. 16, 17. † De Iside et Osiride.

duced by it. The verbs and adjectives were, many of them, (probably all, for the subject is still under investigation,) the names of objects, animate or inanimate, suggesting the peculiarities of their appearance and habits; as a cameleopard, to be long, to extend; a wolf, to be cunning; a scarlet ibis, to be red. To this extent all was picture in the language as well as in the writing. It also consists of comparatively a small number of sounds; the same sound expressing many different ideas; probably because different qualities of the same animal were thus variously employed. So that it seems scarcely possible to arrive at any other conclusion than that the language and writing arose together.

But we have observed the same intimate union between the writing and the idolatrous system of this singular people, and shown the probability, we might perhaps say certainty, that it also was invented together with the writing, and therefore with the language. Yet are all the three, as we have seen, systems of great intricacy and refinement. These are also facts, resulting from the recent researches into the antiquities of Egypt. And how, we ask again, are these strange anomalies to be reconciled? A generation of men highly cultivated, possessed of great mental powers, yet without religion, writing, or even language! It is contrary to all experience that a civilized state of society should exist without religion: it is equally opposed to all analogy to assume that men may be civilized without writing; but without language, civilization is plainly impossible. There are traces, nevertheless, of much thought and reflection in the construction of the language, writing, and religion of ancient Egypt, and the three appear to have arisen together. Its inventors, therefore, must have acquired the mental culture

which enabled them to construct these systems by the help of some other language, at any rate. How came they then to lose this language? We leave to those who deny or lightly esteem the revelation of God, the suggestion of any theory they can devise whereby to answer the question. Those who reason rightly upon it, who follow the process of close induction by which the mode of reading hieroglyphics was discovered, will scarcely fail to perceive the conclusive and satisfactory nature of the answer which is afforded by that revelation. The language of the first settlers in Egypt had been miraculously confounded, and in that melancholy condition they had to frame for themselves a new language and system of writing.

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE MONUMENTAL HISTORY OF EGYPT.

### PART I.

THUS far the absolute necessity of the inspired history to explain and reconcile the facts which our examination of the antiquities of Egypt has elicited, is sufficiently apparent. The monumental traces of the first migration of the children of Mizraim into Egypt also fully coincide with the account which is recorded in the Bible.

It is much to be regretted that upon the point which first requires attention, a conclusion entirely opposed to this account has been, nevertheless, very hastily admitted by certain authors, whose laborious researches in this intricate subject are otherwise well entitled to our praises. Some of them belong to a school of which it is not too much to say that their credulity as to every thing in the Greek authors is only equalled by their incredulity as to the Bible.

With them that which is narrated by Herodotus, or Diodorus Siculus, is a fact, unless the monuments prove it to be a falsehood; while that which has no authority but the Bible is deemed untrue, and unworthy of notice, unless the monuments, or the historians, or both, prove it to be a fact. So that on no other authority than that of Diodorus, it is assumed and reasoned upon as an admitted fact, that

Egypt was first peopled from Ethiopia Proper; that is, from the countries to the south of it: the circumstance that the land of Cush to the east of it was also named Ethiopia, and that the confusion of the two is not uncommon in the Greek writers, being entirely disregarded. It is, however, still more extraordinary, that these authors should also disregard the monumental facts which have been brought to light by their own researches, and which flatly contradict their strange assumption. If the testimony of the monuments is to be admitted, Meroe, the capital of Ethiopia, cannot have been the cradle of Thebes; and the powerful nation of Ethiopians, living under a civil and religious system identical with that of Egypt long before this latter country was inhabited, and afterwards colonizing it, must be a fable: for no very early monuments exist in Ethiopia; the most ancient of them having been erected by monarchs, of the 18th dynasty of the kings of Egypt, who reigned long after it had become a settled kingdom. The inscriptions on them also plainly intimate that Ethiopia was then a province or dependency of Egypt; and that it continued to be so apparently until the reign of Psammetichus, about 500 B. C. This is all the support that the monuments of Ethiopia afford to this assumption. If we consider those of Egypt, also, with a view to the same subject, the first fact that occurs to us is equally opposed to it. The pyramids which, by the unanimous tradition of the Egyptian priests, as recorded by all the Greek authors, were the oldest of their monuments, are not in the neighbourhood of Thebes, but of Memphis, just on the crown of the Delta, on the east bank of the Nile; that is, on the first spot of habitable ground at which travellers migrating

across the isthmus of Suez would arrive when the Delta was a marsh.

The history of Egypt is by no means exempt from the chronological difficulties that beset the early records of all other nations. As this subject is still under investigation, and as new facts are continually produced respecting it, we content ourselves with a general indication of the various sources, both in the ancient authors, and on the existing monuments, whence the materials for a more accurate arrangement have been derived, and the very satisfactory results which have already been obtained from the examination of them.

Two ancient authorities have given lists of the dynasties or races of the kings of Egypt. One list is preserved by George Syncellus, a chronological writer of the eighth century, under the name of the Old Chronicle: the other is the work of Manetho, a priest of Sebennytus, a city of Egypt, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 180 B. C. By the command of that monarch, he translated into Greek the annals of the ancient kings his predecessors as they then existed on the walls of temples and other monumental records of their actions. His work was divided into three volumes, or parts. It is now lost; but extracts from it have been preserved in the writings of Josephus and Eusebius.

Several extracts from the history of Egypt are also preserved by Herodotus and Diodorus: but as they have merely noted the circumstances which they conceived to be interesting, not even following the chronological order of the succession, the facts they have recorded can only be made available as history by the help of the lists of Manetho.

Many extraordinary and unexpected confirmations of the

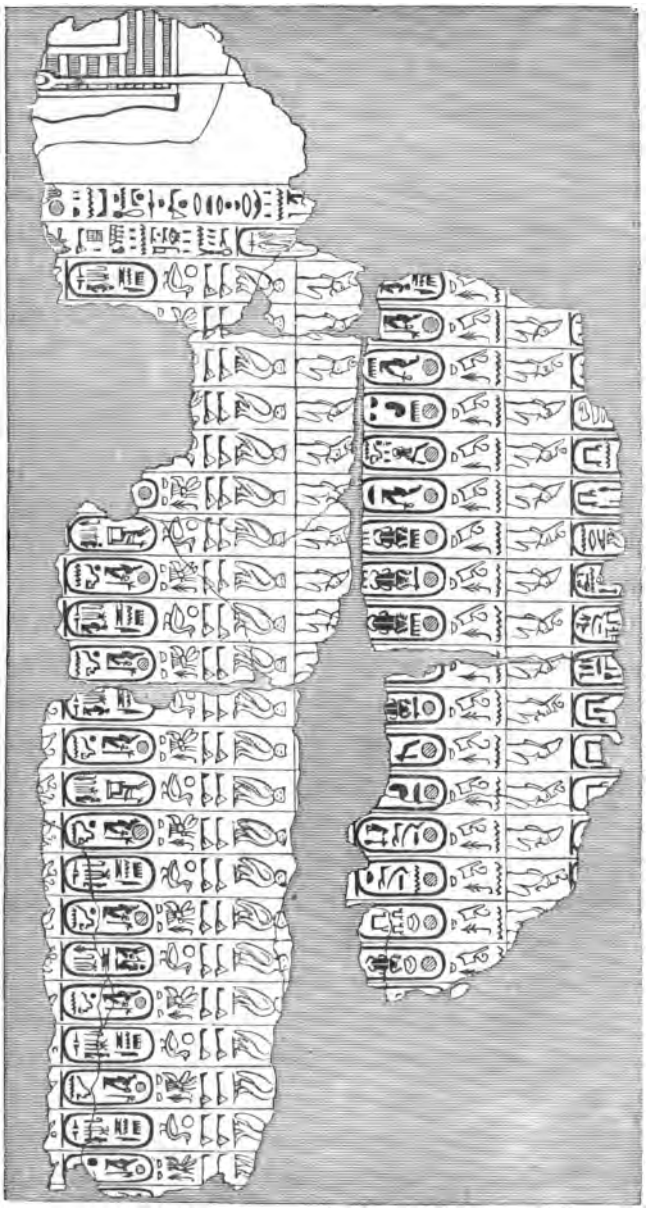
correctness, both of the lists of Manetho, and of the records preserved by the Greek authors, have been discovered by the recent researches among the monuments of Egyptian antiquity.

1. The tablet of Abydos. This is a series of royal rings, inclosing the inaugural titles of the names of many of the ancient kings of Egypt, in the order of their succession. It was engraved on the wall of one of the vestibules of the temple, which has been excavated in the mountain to the north of the city of Abydos. Three rows of these rings still remain; the lowest consists of nine repetitions of the two rings which contain the name and titles of the Pharaoh who executed this work, Ramses, the great Sesostris. The middle row contains the name of his brother, whom he succeeded; and the inaugural titles of sixteen of his predecessors on the throne of Egypt. The complete names of all of them occur on other monuments, and by arranging them together in the order of the table of Abydos, they agree admirably with those of the predecessors of Sesostris, given in the lists of Manetho. The upper line contains the names of still earlier monarchs, as to whom also some important facts have recently been discovered.

It gives us sincere pleasure to be able to state that this valuable historical document has been removed from the ruinous wall on which it was first discovered, and is now in the British Museum: from thence the engraving on p. 179 has been copied.*

2. Similar lists, though not so extensive, have also been

* In its present state, it is more mutilated than when first discovered, so that the early copies contain rings which are now wanting.



Tablet of Abydos.

found in various parts of the ruins of Thebes, representing generally the monarch by whom the building was erected, paying religious honours to his predecessors, or ancestors. These lists entirely confirm the order of succession that occurs in the tablet of Abydos, and make some additions to it.

3. Many fragments of hieratic papyri have also been found in the tombs, containing the names of kings, and the dates of their several reigns in which the transactions they record occurred. One of these, in the museum at Turin, contains a list of more than fifty-four kings in the order of their succession, of a very similar character to the lists of Manetho.

4. The inscribed tablets, which are so frequent in collections of Egyptian antiquities, also occasionally record the names and dates of the monarchs of Egypt. These dates are always important, as fixing a term of years during which such monarchs must have reigned. From this assemblage of incontrovertible facts much has already been ascertained, and restored to authentic history, which had before been regarded as fabulous, or at best doubtful; and many important events, the memory of which had altogether perished, are added to the records of mankind.

The lists preserved by the Greek authors, commence with a long catalogue of gods and demi-gods, who are said to have reigned over Egypt for a fabulous period of at least 35,000 years. The monuments also testify that such was an article of the popular belief. The names and titles of certain of their divinities are enclosed in the ring or frame, which invariably implies the exercise of sovereignty. The universality of this doctrine among all ancient nations, that their gods in their capacity of gods, were once also

kings, is a very remarkable circumstance; affording ground for the conjecture that this tradition had a common origin in all of them, and that like many similar traditions, it had also originated from some actual occurrence. To go into particulars upon so vague a subject would be to undertake an investigation that would necessarily lead to no result. It may, however, be generally observed upon it, that the account of men originally under the temporal sovereignty of God himself, and falling from that high estate into successive stages of degeneracy, is exactly in accordance with the Scripture narrative of the history of the human race. We again call attention to the uniformity of this testimony of antiquity to the highly privileged and civilized, not savage condition of mankind at first. The Scriptures of truth teach us that the progress of man since his creation has been from civilization downwards, not from the savage upwards, except when a revelation from God has been vouchsafed to him; and the early history of all nations testifies to the truth of this account.

The first mortal who ruled Egypt, according to Manetho, was called Menes. This name occurs at the head of a procession of statues of kings of Egypt, who are receiving the homage of Ramses, the great Sesostris, their successor, in a vast scene of religious ceremony depicted on one of the walls of the palace of Luxor, at Thebes. It is written and enclosed in the usual ring or frame. This procession was principally intended to honour the immediate ancestor of Sesostris, who, as we have before observed, was a monarch of the eighteenth dynasty; the earlier kings being represented by one or two of the most celebrated among them. It is, therefore, a very satisfactory

confirmation of the account of Manetho to find the name of Menes at the head of it. This king is said to have laid the foundations of Memphis, and to have reclaimed the Delta, which was hitherto a marsh, by means of embankments, lakes, and other artificial means. He was an inhabitant of Tanis, a city of Lower Egypt, to the north-east of Memphis. We notice here that the fact that Menes, the first man who sat on the throne of Egypt, came from the north-east, and founded the city of Memphis, is in itself a much stronger argument in favour of the migration of the first settlers from the plain of Shinar, than any thing that the advocates of the Ethiopic origin of the Egyptians have been able to advance in support of it.

The abettors of this theory have been misled by the fable of the Egyptian priests, according to which, Thebes was the seat of government when the gods ruled in Egypt. Upon this legend has been founded the notion that Menes was the first to overturn a government of priests which had already existed at Thebes for many ages, and which had come thither originally from Ethiopia; and that he built the rival capital Memphis for the purpose of consolidating his newly acquired authority: with such implicit faith do certain modern authors receive the teaching of the idolatrous priests of Egypt. Let us now consider the extent of their deference to the authority of Holy Scripture; for there is also another point in this account of Menes upon which it will be needful to remark in this inquiry. The question of dates has been avoided, for a reason which has been already given, and which appears to be a sufficient one. There is as yet much to be learned regarding them from the study of the materials which are already before the public; and we

submit that, until this information has been fully arranged and applied, this is the only safe or even allowable course for those who undertake to give a general and popular view of the subject. It is, therefore, somewhat surprising to find, in a popular account of Egypt, which has very recently appeared, that the reign of Menes is stated to have commenced 5867 years before the birth of Christ! This may at least serve as an instance of the disregard and contempt of the Bible of which we have before complained, in certain writers upon this subject.

At first sight of this question, one consideration suggests itself which, we submit, is perfectly fatal to such a supposition. About 1600 years ago, the Nile emptied itself into the Mediterranean by many mouths, as Juvenal and other contemporary writers inform us; but since then, the mud of the annual inundations has stopped up all the mouths except two. The same cause was always at work; and yet, according to Herodotus,* in the time of Menes, the Delta was already a reclaimable marsh. It is, therefore, plainly impossible that Menes could have lived any thing like 6000 years before the classic era: had this been the case, instead of a reclaimable marsh, the Delta would, in his days, have been an expanse of deep sea.

Our present glance at the monumental history of the successors of Menes will be strictly confined to those parts of it which connect themselves with the events recorded in the Bible, or which otherwise illustrate the inspired narratives. Menes was, according to Manetho, the head of the first dynasty, or family of men, that sat upon the throne of

* Eut. c. 99.

Egypt. Josephus, the Jewish historian, informs us that he lived many years before the times of Abraham. It is not impossible that his name may be a corruption of that of Mizraim, the son of Ham. According to the same authority, fifteen dynasties, comprehending nearly 300 successive monarchs reigned in Egypt, between the times of Menes and those of Abraham; which statement, as it is entirely contradictory of the Scripture account of this interval, demands our serious attention. Strong reasons lead us to infer that these numbers have been grossly exaggerated. The Egyptian priests, of whom Manetho was one, had just before stated that the gods had ruled in Egypt for 30,000 years, and an indefinite time beyond it, before Menes came to the throne. This manifest fable exaggerates the antiquity of Egypt, and shows plainly enough that the keepers of its archives were well disposed to enlarge in this direction. To this it may be added that, according to the Old Chronicle, (which has already been noticed, and which is also the account given by the Egyptian priests,) only 660 years elapsed from the times of Menes to those of the sixteenth dynasty, when Abraham lived. No particulars are given of the fifteen families who occupied the throne during this interval, as is the case with the kings of the sixteenth dynasty, and those that followed them; the chronicle merely relates, that after the reign of the gods, eight demi gods and fifteen families of men ruled in Egypt for 660 years. This omission is a remarkable one.

Let us now see what evidence upon this question is afforded by the existing monuments of Egypt. The reader must again be reminded that the whole of this part of the subject is still under investigation. On the early history,

especially, much has recently been ascertained in this country, and more may be hoped for from the labours of those who are engaged upon it. We must, therefore, content ourselves with a general outline of the present results.

In perfect coincidence with the Old Chronicle of Syncellus, the monuments of Egypt preserve very few points of certain history, until we come to the fifteenth or sixteenth dynasties, which were contemporary with Abraham. The names of the Pharaohs of the fourth dynasty, the builders of the three great pyramids of Memphis, and of those at Abousir, probably the fifth, comprehend the whole that has yet been satisfactorily ascertained. These discoveries establish the point which we have already assumed on different grounds, that the art of writing in hieroglyphics had existed in Egypt from its very foundation as an empire; and this fact also affords a general indication, which adds considerably to the probability that the number of the early kings of Egypt was exaggerated by the priests. These kings, like their successors, were in the habit of inscribing their names upon the sides of the quarries they had wrought, of the rocks they had cut through for the purpose of making roads, and in other similar imperishable situations. Many travellers who have lately visited Egypt, and especially our own countryman, Mr. Burton, have sought for and copied these inscriptions with much zeal and industry. Yet the whole number of names of kings found by them, which they suppose to belong to this early period, because they do not know where in the later dynasties they ought to be arranged, is exceedingly small. Of these also some will doubtless prove to belong to far later times, in which there

are yet many deficiencies to supply, while others are merely divine names enclosed in rings, of which some account has been given already.

There are two existing monuments which strongly confirm this indication. The one is the tablet of Abydos, which, being strictly a genealogy, cannot be supposed to have been abbreviated. This tablet when complete appears to have contained the names of seventy-seven predecessors of Sesostris, the thirteenth king of the eighteenth dynasty. Deduct from this twenty-nine, the number of kings who reigned between his times and the commencement of the fifteenth dynasty, according to the same lists, and we have forty-nine kings from Menes to the age of Abraham, instead of the 260 of Manetho. The other monument is the interior of a chamber, greatly defaced, in the palace of Karnac, at Thebes; where Thothmosis III. or Mœris, the fifth king of the eighteenth dynasty, is represented doing homage to the whole line of his ancestry or predecessors, who are ranged round the room in three rows. As the room has evidently been built for this purpose, abbreviation is still more improbable here. In this room fifty-eight kings are represented; which, deducting twenty, the number of reigns in the interval between Mœris and the commencement of the fifteenth dynasty, leaves thirty-eight kings from Menes to Abraham instead of 260. The difference of this result from that of the tablet of Abydos it is not very difficult to reconcile. Probably, in the latter case, the vanity of Sesostris, or the flattery of the priests, has carried his genealogy up from Menes, through the eight demigods and three gods, who, according to their tradition, ruled Egypt during the indefinite period of ages to which we have already alluded.

Thus do these researches into the literature and antiquities of Egypt tend to the vindication of the truth of God as revealed in Holy Scripture.

According to the lists of Manetho, the three great pyramids at Memphis were built by the first three monarchs of the fourth dynasty, who exercised the sovereign power at Memphis, like their predecessors. The description of these stupendous piles of masonry is familiar to most readers. The Great Pyramid measures 732 feet on each side of the base, and is 474 feet high. The base of this enormous fabric would fill the entire area of Lincoln's Inn Fields. These, as well as the other pyramids in the neighbourhood of Memphis, have all been recently very carefully examined by one of our countrymen, Col. Howard Vyse, and the results of his measurements and excavations are now in course of publication.

The name of the founder of the Great Pyramid has been detected in a small tomb in its immediate vicinity. It

is written in Greek by Manetho Σουφις, which is said by Eratosthenes to mean in Egyptian κομαστος, "one who has much hair." The hieroglyphic name reads ϣⲟⲧϥⲱ, which has also the same meaning in Coptic; ϣⲟⲧ much, ϥⲱ hair.

The name of his son, who founded the second pyramid, has been discovered in a similar situation. His name reads,

ϣϥ-ⲣⲏ, Shefré: he is called Suphis II. by Manetho, and Cephrenes by Herodotus. It is inscribed on a beautiful tablet in the British Museum, which was brought from one of the tombs near Memphis; and was engraved in memory of a personage who acted as superintendent of the building of the Great Pyramid to

king Cephrenes. The execution of this tablet is exquisitely beautiful, perhaps not surpassed by any existing specimen of Egyptian art.

The name of the founder of the third pyramid was discovered under very extraordinary circumstances by Col. Howard Vyse. When he had succeeded, by means of extensive excavations, in discovering the entrance to this pyramid, he found a large chamber in the interior, from the floor of which some portions of a wooden coffin were disinterred from the rubbish which covered it to a great depth: portions of woollen cloth and bones were also found in the same situation. They occurred near an inclined passage leading down to the sepulchral apartment, where was the sarcophagus that once contained the coffin, which had been forced open. The coffin had evidently been taken from thence to the upper apartment, where it had been broken up. All these remains have been brought to this country, and are now in the British Museum. There is a hieroglyphic inscription, very beautifully engraved on the fragment of the coffin, containing a royal

name, which reads . The name of the builder of the third pyramid was, according to Manetho, Mencheres. The whole inscription has been translated by Mr. Birch, the very learned senior assistant at the Museum, and shown by him to repeat exactly the mythological notions which were inscribed on mummy-cases in all ages; thus proving the high antiquity of the religion as well as of the written system of ancient Egypt. The perfection, to which the fine arts had attained in these remote periods will excite no surprise in those who reflect that these arts must have been well known to the builders of the city and tower

on the plains of Shinar, and that, however abused and perverted, some remains of that teaching of God which had first originated these arts among men, might still have been lingering with these long past generations.

The picture of a pyramid forms a part of the hieroglyphic name of Memphis ; and the immutability of all things in Egypt leads us to infer from this circumstance, that the foundation of the pyramids was coeval with that of the city. It is probable that the title of being the builders of them, and the honour of being buried in them, were given to the monarchs by whom they were finished.

The form of the temple of Belus at Babylon (the tower of Babel) was pyramidal, according to Herodotus; it is also an ascertained fact that the ancient idolatries all over the world particularly affected this form in their sacred edifices. These circumstances, in addition to those already noticed, render it probable that this stupendous monument of human pride and folly served for the example and pattern of the pyramids of Egypt.

However, be this as it may, the terrible punishment which fell upon the whole human race on the plains of Babylon, wrought no reformation in the sufferers. They went forth bearing their curse, but still idolaters at heart, employing their mental powers in hiding and perverting the religious truths which had been delivered to them. Thus, though idolatry had most probably been the sin which had called forth this expression of God's fierce anger upon them, they still went on perversely in their own ways, and overspread the whole earth with nations of idolaters.

Afflictive dispensations of themselves never confer any spiritual benefit upon those who are visited by them.

Whether the affliction befall individuals or nations, they will merely gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven: they will only harden their hearts, like Pharaoh, in fiercer determination to resist the Divine will, unless restrained by his grace. The curse of this wicked generation has rested upon the whole of their descendants. Though for nearly 2000 years the full revelation of God's grace has been manifested upon the earth, yet how large a majority of mankind still remain wholly given to idolatry. Nevertheless when the Spirit shall be poured from on high upon the church of God's believing people, he will arise, and, by the all-conquering energy of the gospel of his Son, cast down the thrones of the idols which have so long tyrannized over the nations of the earth. Then shall the sin of Babel be destroyed, and the curse of Babel shall depart also. For the whole family of man shall be once more united; not perhaps to be again of one speech and one language, but in the better unity of the faith. "The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one," Zech. xiv. 9.

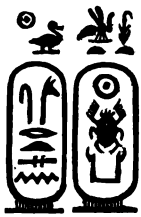
The next particular of history which can be acquired from the study of the monuments of Egypt, immediately touches upon the times of Abraham. According to the lists of Manetho, five names of kings remain on the tablet of Abydos, of the period immediately preceding that of the eighteenth dynasty.* A short genealogy, which occurs in the very beautiful tomb of Nevotph, at Beni Hassan, in Middle Egypt, (whence have been copied the most interesting of

* Four of them still remain: they are the first four rings to the right of the middle row. (See above, page 179.) The other, which is the earliest in point of time, was broken off in removing the tablet.

the illustrations of the domestic manners of the Egyptians,) gives an addition to these of two names of their predecessors. The five latest names appear to be the five kings of the seventeenth dynasty; the two that precede them, are the last of the sixteenth. Manetho relates that in the interval between this and the era of the pyramids, there had elapsed more than 3000 years, during which 200 kings and upwards had sat upon the throne of Egypt. We cannot refrain from again adverting to the remarkable fact, that though both their predecessors and successors have left the imperishable memorials of their names and works inscribed amply upon the granite and basalt of their native rocks, scarcely a dozen names, and certainly not a dozen monuments, can be found in the whole of Egypt to recall the memory either of this tremendous interval, or of its 200 kings. And yet the whole number of kings given by Manetho, from Menes to Cambyses, is but 352. It certainly appears very probable, from this consideration only, that both the interval and its kings have been grossly exaggerated, and that the greater part of them never existed at all but in the papyrus rolls of the Egyptian priests, which, doubtless, were faithfully translated by Manetho.

Egypt was governed by the kings of the sixteenth dynasty, when Abraham sojourned there. It was also in the reign of the last monarch of this family that the first invasion of the shepherds took place. Some records of this remote but important epoch are still in existence. We will endeavour to condense as briefly as possible the information they seem to convey.

These monuments are principally of the reign of the



earliest of these Pharaohs, whose name and titles read king of an obedient people, (sun offered to the world.) Son of the sun, (Osortasen.) Of his immediate successors, but very few and scanty records are remaining. His son and successor, who is supposed to be the Timaus mentioned by Manetho, is called on the monuments

Amenumis. The only memorial of this family at Thebes is the name of the first Osortasen, of whom we have already spoken, on the broken base of a statue in the sanctuary at Karnac, and this is the most ancient monument that has yet been discovered throughout the whole extent of that vast city. If the question of the superior antiquity of Thebes or Memphis is to be referred to the monuments which exist in the ruins of each, it will soon be decided.

A tablet which was found at Wady halfa, in Nubia, and removed to the museum at Turin,* informs us that this same Osortasen made war upon and conquered several races of Ethiopians, whose names are enumerated. Ten of these names are still legible, others are obliterated. If the temple in which this tablet was inscribed, stood at the extreme point of his conquests, which is not improbable, the people inhabiting the site of what was afterwards Thebes, may have been among them, and Osortasen may have been the founder of the city of a hundred gates. There is nothing on the monuments to contradict this supposition.

The inscriptions and paintings in the tomb at Beni Hassan

* Rosellini, M. R. pl. 25.

have preserved the name of his son and successor Amenumis, who also waged successful war against the same races of Ethiopians. It was, perhaps, in the reign of this Amenumis that the invasion of the shepherds took place. Manetho's account of this invasion describes it as very sudden and successful, and he proceeds to inform us, that having obtained possession of Memphis, they chose one of themselves, named Salathis, whom they made king. The Egyptian priests complain of the cruelty and barbarity of the shepherds, stating that they oppressed the chiefs of Egypt, reduced the inhabitants to slavery, burned the cities, and overthrew the temples of the gods. It is by no means certain, however, that such was the fact; there being monumental indications which support on this point the Scripture account of Egypt in Joseph's days.

The city of Heliopolis lay to the north-east of Memphis, and was therefore directly in the route of the invading army of shepherds. Yet at the present day, the only mark that points out, amid the sands of the desert, the site of Heliopolis, is a magnificent obelisk, upright and in its place, and having on each face the same hieroglyphic inscription, engraved most beautifully, which includes the name of Osortasen.* The modern writers, who support the barbarous and destructive character of the invasion of the shepherds, admit the remaining of this obelisk in its place to be a very singular circumstance, and endeavour to explain it by the supposition that it had been thrown down by the shepherds, and erected

* It reads, "Horus the life-giver, the king of an obedient people, (sun offered to the world) lord of Upper and Lower Egypt, the life-giving son of the sun Osortasen beloved of the spirits of Poone, the hawk of gold, the life-giver, the great god, (sun offered to the world,) the celebrator of the festivals, giving eternal life."

again after their expulsion, by their conquerors. They refer to the two obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles, which are now at Alexandria, but are found from their inscription to have been originally erected in some other city, in proof of the existence of such a practice. This, however, really proves nothing. Had the obelisk at Heliopolis been thrown down, and afterwards re-erected by any successor of Osortasen, whether Pharaoh or Ptolemy, he would certainly either have recorded the deed in an inscription upon the obelisk, or he would have erased the name of Osortasen, and substituted his own in its place. All the monuments of Egypt bear testimony to the universality of this practice of adding or substituting the name of the restorer for that of the founder; and the practice continued as long as hieroglyphics remained in use. So that the absence of all hieroglyphic records of their removal from the obelisks of Alexandria plainly limits the time of it to a very late period, when Heliopolis had been long deserted.* This consideration suggests the probability that the obelisk at Heliopolis is now standing in the place in which it had been at first erected, contributing some degree of support, at any rate, to the plain tenor of the inspired account of the sojourn of Joseph in Egypt. The Pharaoh then reigning was a shepherd king, but he had adopted the manners and customs of Egypt; and instead of the savage devastator and oppressor described by the Egyptian priests, he was the benefactor of the country over which he ruled.

* Probably at the end of the third century of the Christian era: about that time an obelisk was brought from Egypt by Constantius, and erected at Rome.—*Ammian. Marcell. Hist.*

A further testimony to the truth of the Scripture account of these shepherds is afforded by the existence at Memphis of the majority of the remaining monuments of their predecessors. Had they been thus bent upon destruction, it is not to be supposed that a single tablet would have escaped them during the 260 years in which they reigned there.

The certainty from Scripture that the shepherd kings had adopted the manners and customs of Egypt has been already pointed out. There is the name of a king on a tablet evidently of great antiquity though of coarse execution, which is in the British Museum. The same name has also been copied from a rock which had been cut through in ancient times to form the road to Cosseir by the Red Sea. It reads ΦΙΦΙ, and is not improbably the hieroglyphic name of the king under whom Joseph flourished, and which the priests converted, by a pun, into Aphophis, the destroyer, ΑΦΟΦ.

These indications, though slight, are nevertheless all in one direction: they point plainly to the state of things described in the Bible, which differs so materially from the account of the Egyptian priests.

The native Egyptians in considerable numbers followed their king, who fled into Upper Egypt from this invasion of the shepherds. Here they penetrated, according to Manetho, beyond the bounds of Egypt Proper, southward into Nubia, and eastward to the shores of the Red Sea; founding another empire, which was governed by the dynasty of kings called in the lists the 17th. In these events, the future greatness

of Thebes originated, and they will account for the peculiarity of two capitals in Egypt. The native sovereigns being expelled from Memphis, Thebes became the metropolis of Egypt.

The monuments give but very scanty materials whence to form a history of the first five monarchs of this dynasty. The whole of them were named either Amenumis or Osortasen, agreeably to a custom very prevalent in ancient Egypt, of giving the grandfather's name to the grandson. They still continued to make war upon the Nubians or Ethiopians, and extended in that direction the conquests of the head of their family, Osortasen I. The name of the third of them is inscribed in the sanctuary of the temple of Semné, in Nubia. It was probably in these wars that they acquired the military skill and experience of which their late reverses had so fatally taught them the necessity, and which enabled them shortly afterwards to recover possession of Memphis, and expel the invaders.

A collection of superb tablets, executed during the reigns of five of the monarchs of this epoch, is now in the British Museum. They were found at Abydos, a city of the northern part of Upper Egypt. No fewer than eight of these tablets are inscribed with dates computed from the commencement of the king's reign during which they were executed. Osortasen I., whose hieroglyphic name has been already given, reigned, according to one of them,* thirty-nine years. A tablet quoted by Rosellini is dated the forty-third of his reign.

His third successor, Amenumis II., reigned at least nine-

* Anastasy No. 9 of the Museum.

teen years, on the unanswerable authority of one of these tablets, (Anastasy 57.) The succeeding monarch, Osortasen III., whose name is the first of the middle row to the right in the genealogy of Abydos, (see p. 179,) reigned not less than six years.*

The fifth monarch of this line reigned seven years, or more. His name follows that of his predecessor, in the middle row of the genealogy of Abydos. He is also named Osortasen, IV. (Anastasy 18.)

The name of the sixth of these Pharaohs was Amenumis III. His title, or prenomen, is the third to the right of the middle row of the tablet of Abydos: he reigned twenty-five years, at least, according to one of these tablets.

Copies of some of the more remarkable of them are here subjoined.

The top of this most beautiful tablet, (see engraving on p. 198,) bears the winged globe, the symbol of Har-hat, the celestial sun. The principal inscription, the two horizontal lines immediately below it, read thus:—"In the 19th year of his majesty the king, (sun of golden offerings) Amenumis II.,† (the third successor of Osortasen I.,) loving Osiris, the lord of Abydos, the giver of life and stability, like the sun for ever." The third line reads both to the right and left, divides in the middle. The part to the right means a "house of blessing, that is, the sepulchre; wine, milk, incense, oxen and geese have been offered by the constable of the palace, Sevek Re, the justified." This part refers to the group of six figures on the right side of the upper part of the tablet,

* Anastasy No. 7.

† The first legible ring to the right in the middle row of the tablet of Abydos, above, p. 179, is the title of the successor of Amenumis II., who was called Osortasen.

Tablet, Anastasy No. 57, of the British Museum.

which represents the eldest son of Sevek Re with his five sisters in the act of making the offering to the mummy of their father, which this tablet commemorates. The son bears a linen bandage for swathing the mummy, the daughters are bringing lotus flowers. The column immediately over the first figure reads, " His son who loves him, Sevek Re." The others had the names of the daughters, which are no longer legible. The left side of the third line reads thus: "A house of blessing; wine, milk, incense, oxen, geese, have been offered by the constable of the palace, Saotph, the son of Tese-nofre, the just." This was the son and successor of Sevek Re. The inscription also refers to the group on the left side of the tablet, consisting of seven of the children of Saotph. The two columns of small characters over the first figure to the left, with a roll of linen in his hand, seem to read, " His son who loves him, performing the prescribed rites of sacrifice before his lord," that is, his father. This was probably the son and heir of Saotph. The next two lines refer to the second son, who offers two lotus flowers. It also reads, " His son who loves him ;" then follows the name, which is nearly defaced. Three other sons follow, each offering a duck or goose. Waterfowl were very much used as an article of food by the ancient Egyptians. This fact, which is mentioned by Herodotus, (Euterpe, c. 117,) is abundantly confirmed by the pictures on the monuments, which represent geese and ducks as almost invariably forming a part of the viands both in feasts and sacrifices. The name of the third son of Saotph, the last of the upper row, has been cut off in fitting this tablet to the door of the tomb which it closed. That of the fourth, the first figure in the lower row, seems to have been Rasajeri ; but it is not very legible. His fifth, and appar-

ently youngest son, was named Chonsou. Two daughters are represented, and a third appears to have been cut off in fitting the stone. The name of the first was Onk-nat; that of the second Shont; that of the third, and probably youngest, is not legible.

The square tablet in the centre, filled with columns of hieroglyphics, is a list of the various articles offered in the tomb of the deceased by their families. They are specified with all the minuteness of a bill of fare. The first in the upper column of the table to the left is "one vial, containing liquid odours, essences;" "one vase of incense" is the second article enumerated. Then follow two other vases, and six vials, the contents of which are recorded, but the sense has not yet been made out: most probably they were perfumes, in the form either of essences, or of fragrant woods or roots pounded. Two joints from the fore part of some animal, the head, the eyes, and some portion of the viscera, are the next in order. Then follow one vase of frankincense, and vases of other substances to the end of the first column, the hieroglyphic names of which are yet undeciphered. But little account can be given of the second column. A vial of distilled essence for perfume, a jar of water, a flower-pot containing a palm branch, (the symbol of youth and of the year,) two chests containing images, (probably such as have been found in the tombs, full of clay figures of the deceased,) the heart, and probably some other portions of slaughtered animals, and four cooking vessels, or cauldrons of boiling water,—are amongst the articles deposited in the tomb of the deceased by the piety of their descendants. In the third column, the thigh, the liver, and the mesentery of the slaughtered animals, are specified as well as

several other parts or joints. Also ducks and geese of five different species. The remainder of the column seems to be filled with the names of sauces and condiments, to be eaten with these luxuries. In the fourth and last column, five different kinds of wines are mentioned among the offerings which were brought to the deceased. The white wine and the wine of the Mareotis are already known; the names of the others are yet undetermined. There is also mention of seeds of various kinds; probably pungent or aromatic seeds, which were then used in cookery. It may be observed, that the numbers of each of these articles are brought down in a line by themselves at the foot of each column, for the purpose of ready reference. These offerings were to be repeated at given periods, and remained ever afterwards a permanent charge upon the estate and family of the deceased. One of the Greek papyri translated by Dr. Young,* is a deed for the conveyance of a portion of the offerings to certain mummies in the burial place at Thebes, to other parties, who had purchased them. As the portion sold was only one sixth of the whole, and as the testimony of sixteen witnesses was thought necessary on the occasion, Dr. Young very justly infers, that the revenue obtained from this source by the priests was by no means inconsiderable. This transaction took place in the reign of Ptolemy Physcon, about 106 B. C. The custom on which it was founded satisfactorily accounts for the exact registry of the offering on the monument before us, and for the compact and business-like form in which it is recorded, of which a correct idea may be formed from the

* See his account of some Recent Discoveries, Chapter v.

foregoing cut, though it was not practicable to render the characters legible in so minute a copy.

The twelve columns of hieroglyphics which follow explain the picture at the bottom of the tablet. They contain two inscriptions, both commencing in the middle and reading from left to right, and from right to left. We begin with that which reads from left to right:—"Act of adoration to Osiris: may he give a house of blessing, wine, milk, abundance of oxen, geese, and clothes in offering to the devoted to Osiris, (in Abydos?) the constable of the palace, Sevek Re, the son of .....,* and to his wife, who loves him, Tesenofre." Both these personages are represented immediately below, seated before an altar piled with offerings.

The other inscription is an act of adoration to Sev or Saturn, the father of Osiris, accompanied with the same prayers, that in acceptance of the offerings of the deceased, he would give a mansion of bliss, with abundance of wine, milk, meat, bread, clothes, etc., to the devoted to Osiris, the constable of the palace, Saotph, the son of Tesenofre, and therefore also the son of Sevek Re, and, according to the never-varying custom of Egypt, the successor to his dignity. The wife of Saotph who loves him is Es-onk, the daughter of Erpet. This last name Erpet is also that of some unknown quadruped.

In the middle, between the two couples whose bodies were deposited in the tomb, is a representation of the rich offering, the particulars of which, on the preceding tablet, have been already considered. Two tables, each piled with ten loaves of sacred (shew) bread, form the two ex-

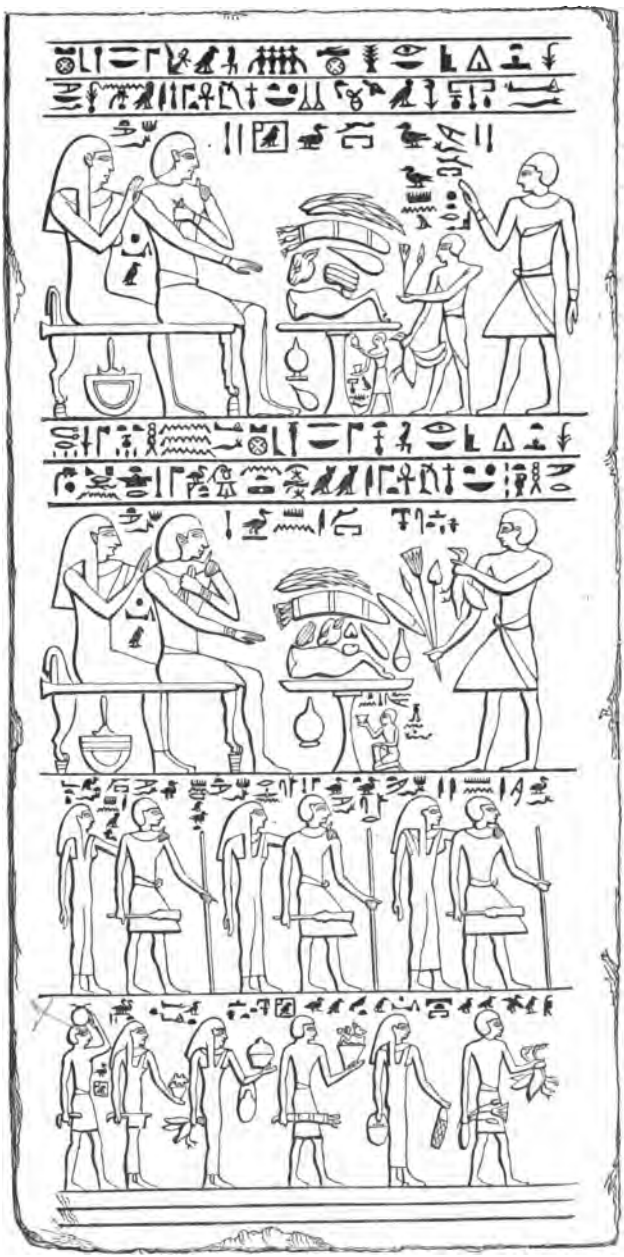
* The name of the father is uncertain.

tremities of the group. In front is a frame, on which the vessels containing the wine, milk, and other liquid offerings, are symmetrically arranged. Beneath this is a large ear of Egyptian corn. The heads of two oxen dressed are piled upon a mat, with the livers of the same animals. This mat is really on the same plane with the bottle frame and the feet of the altars. That it is not placed upon the vases (see engraving) is sufficiently indicated by the space between them, which was the conventional mode with the Egyptians of distinguishing between objects on the same plane, and objects piled upon one another. By this we also understand that the branches of lotus flowers, and the thighs of the ox, which appear above the shew-bread, are really on the floor. This is also the case with the two kidneys and some others of the viscera, which appear in the centre, between the two altars, and are surmounted by a goose. All these are intended to be arranged round the altars. They are placed in their present position for the sake of a certain compactness of the whole effect, which the Egyptians evidently greatly admired.

This tablet was the stone which closed the aperture of the tomb in which were deposited the mummies of Sevek Re and Saotph his son, who successively held the office of constable of the palace at Abydos. Saotph died in the eighteenth year of Amenumis I.

The tablet on the next page is of the same period as the former one, and does not yield to it either in perfectness of preservation, or elaborate beauty of execution. It is, like the former, a tomb-stone, and commences with the usual formula: —"An act of adoration to Osiris, the lord of Tatou,* he who

* That is, of the region of stability.



Tablet. Anastasy No. 8.

is in the Amenti, ruling in the upper region, great god, lord of Abydos.* May he give a house of blessing, wine, milk, abundance of oxen, geese, clothes, and all other good and pure blessings, with the life divine, to him who is over the south, loving his master (the king) attached to the charge of him; the constable of the palace, Si-Hathor." This is the personage who is seated on the double throne or sofa. The female who is seated at his side, with one arm upon his shoulder, is "his wife who loves him, Shoi-on," which is a name of Cephrenes. Probably she was descended from the Pharaoh of that name, by whom the second pyramid was built, and therefore had taken his name. The aversion to change as to all things in Egypt extended even to names, which seldom varied in the same family. Underneath the throne is a mirror, in its case, the constant companion of ladies of high rank.

Before this pair stands an altar, with the offerings named in the inscription, which are presented to their deceased parents by three of their sons. The name of the eldest, who was full grown at the death of his father, and inherited his title of constable of the palace, is not very intelligible. That of his second brother, apparently a boy of fourteen, was Simonthou. He is represented with a flower and an ear of corn in one hand, in the other he holds a live duck by the neck. The youngest brother's name, an infant, who is offering two vases, and apparently stands under the altar, was Egorem..f. This group represents the dedica-

* Osiris was especially worshipped at Abydos. It was there that according to the fable preserved by Plutarch, his body was buried. The remains of the temples show that the Triad worshipped at Abydos was Osiris, Isis, and Horus.

tion of the tomb, which the slab once closed up, to Si-Hathor, and his wife Shephre, who were the first buried in it.

The two lines which follow read, "An act of adoration to Osiris, lord of Amenti, good and great god, lord of Abydos: may he give water, essences, perfumes, wax, and all other good and pure blessings, with divine life in the month and half months of the festivals of Thoth, the divine purifier of the ..... * the devoted constable of the palace, Amun si," who is evidently the eldest son of Si-Hathor. He is seated with his wife, the same name as his mother, Shefra, before an offering; the group being an exact repetition of the one above. An altar with offerings stands before them, which are presented by a man named Egor Saotphhet, the youngest brother of the deceased, who appears as an infant in the preceding picture, and a child, whose name reads Eneniotf, probably his son. The picture beneath this scene represents three of the sons of Amunsi, attired in the ceremonial habit, which was worn on the occasion of funerals; each bearing a staff in one hand, and in the other the sceptre called Pat, which is the symbol of consecration. They are in the act of approaching the altar for the purpose of paying their adorations to their deceased parents. The artist intended to represent them walking in line, and therefore the first-born is to the left, which was supposed to be nearest the eye. He is styled, "His son who loves him, the constable of the palace, Amenumis;" the female who accompanies him is called "his mother," probably of the deceased, Beseth. The name of the second son is Osortasen, that of his wife Monthouset. The third

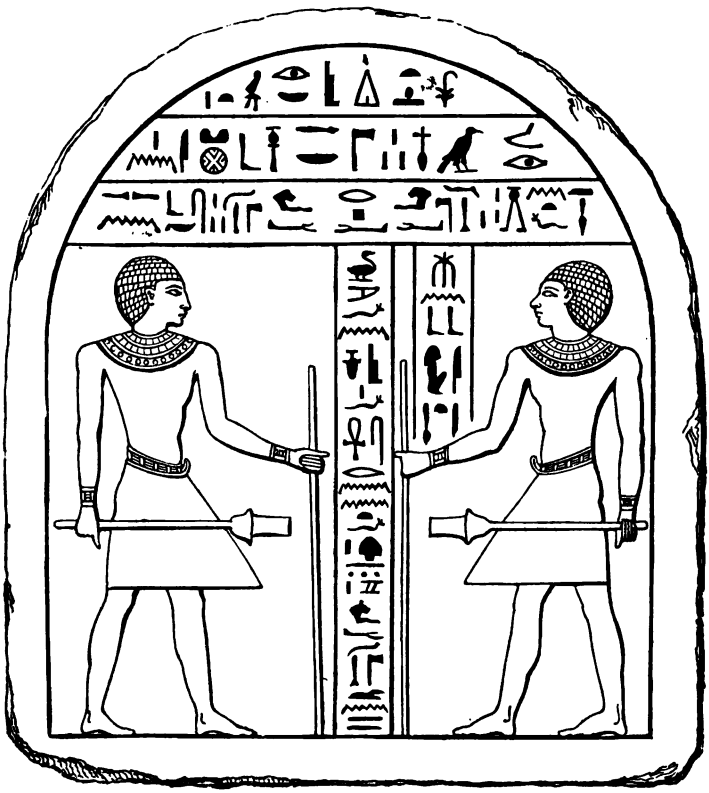
* The meaning of this part of the inscription is not certain.

son was named Amunei, his wife Tesiosor. The lowest picture on the slab represents three men servants, and three maid servants, in attendance upon the personages who are depicted above them, and bearing the various objects which they are about to present in offering. The hieroglyphic inscription above them is somewhat difficult; it appears to read, "The bearers of offerings to the lady president of the palace, Shefre. A sacrifice to Si-hathor by Sa-otph to ..... their spirits." The mention of the name of Shephra in preference to that of her husband, in this inscription, adds probability to our conjecture that she was lineally descended from the Pharaoh of that name. We also learn from this last inscription that the tablet was sculptured, and probably the tomb it once closed was also excavated at the expense of Sa-otph, the youngest son of Sihathor, who was an infant at the time of his death. This circumstance satisfactorily accounts for his taking precedence of the sons in the second scene, where he is offering to his eldest brother, Amunsi.

The following is (p. 208) the tablet, Anastasy No. 19.

The artist in this instance has studied a severe simplicity of style, which renders this tablet, in point of pictorial effect, perhaps the most beautiful Egyptian monument in existence.

The purport of it is fully explained by the inscription:— "Act of adoration to Osiris, lord of Amenti, the beholder of just and good works, the great god, lord of Abydos, from the military chief president over the prophets, Sebeksen. The military chief presiding over the prophets, Eneniotf, his son who loves him, who has enthroned him in his heart has made (by this monument) the name of his father to live



Tablet. Anastasy No. 19.

in Egypt; the chief president of the prophets Sebeksen, born of the lady Obeb." This monument of the piety of a son to the memory of his father is of the same style and material as the two former, and therefore evidently of the same early date.

This examination of a very small part of the interesting series of tablets from Abydos, now in the British Museum, adds to the probability of the opinion that the Pharaohs of the sixteenth dynasty resided in that city after their

expulsion from Memphis by the shepherd kings. All the personages commemorated on these monuments were attached to the court or the palace; and the names of Osortasen and Amenumis, which were alternately assumed by the kings of this race, appearon one of them. These personages, therefore, were of the blood royal; and very probably the city in which they were buried was also that in which they had lived.

It will have been noticed that these tablets, which are very common in collections of Egyptian antiquities, served as title pages to the tombs; corresponding in this with the propyla of the temples, which have before been considered. They conveyed a general idea of the contents of the sepulchres they closed. As they generally commemorate certain officers attached to the service of the reigning Pharaoh, and as they were found at Abydos, we have the probability, though not the certainty, that it was the abode of the kings of this family. Abydos is situated near the northern limit of Upper Egypt.

In the style of their execution, they closely resemble those of the epoch of the pyramids. This fact, so important in the decision of the dates of Egyptian monuments, is mentioned here on the high authority of Mr. Birch, the senior assistant at the Museum, the extent and depth of whose learning in his department are only equalled by the kindness and urbanity with which he communicates the information he possesses. From hence also it would therefore appear that these epochs were separated from each other by no very long period, which is in accordance with the tenor of the Scripture chronology.

These remains of the Abrahamic period of Egyptian

history bear evident marks of having been executed by a peaceful race of men, who lived in the midst of plenty and affluence, cultivating the parental and social affections, and the arts of civilization. The allusions to war and to military life are less frequent on their monuments than on those of their successors of the eighteenth and following dynasties. All this is what the inspired narrative of the sojourn of Abraham in Egypt would have led us to infer, Gen. xii. Pharaoh expresses much conscientious feeling of the sacredness of the obligation of matrimony, and much horror at the idea of having been betrayed into the danger of sin against it, verses 17—19. Abram also returned from Egypt with much wealth, at a time when the neighbouring countries were desolated by famine.

This indication of the monuments is likewise in accordance with Manetho's account of the invasion of the shepherds, which is preserved by Josephus. This event took place after the return of Abram from Egypt. He writes that "Under the reign of Timaos (Amenumis) God was angry, it is not known why, and an ignoble race of men came unawares from the east country, invaded Egypt, and took possession of it in a very short time, and almost without a battle." The tenor of this account shows plainly enough that a quiet and peaceable state of society, such as generally produces the beautiful and highly finished works of art we are considering, prevailed at that time in Egypt.

The sixth monarch of this seventeenth dynasty was named Amosis; thus his name appears both in the lists of Manetho, and on the monuments. This was the monarch by whom the foundations of the temple of Amoun were first laid at Thebes; and as Amoun was the tutelary deity of that city, doubtless it

would be one of the earliest public buildings erected there. This fact is recorded in a tablet which still exists in the quarry whence the stones were hewn. When this most important document is published, it will probably set at rest the question respecting the relative antiquities of Thebes and Memphis. We are again indebted to the curator of the Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum for this valuable confirmation of the view of the question which so necessarily follows upon the narrative of Holy Scripture.

The most celebrated act of the reign of Amosis was the expulsion of the shepherds from Memphis. The two races had, throughout the whole period of the usurpation, kept up a war along the confines of their kingdoms with various success. But Amosis recovered the possession of Memphis, and of the whole Delta, from Asseth, the second successor of Aphophis, compelling him and his army to take refuge in Aouaris, a fortified city or camp, which they had prepared on the eastern borders of Egypt.

It has just been noticed that, during the 260 years of their expulsion from Memphis, the Pharaohs of Upper Egypt had been engaged in continual wars; and this circumstance seems to have had a strong effect upon the national character of the Egyptians: they became a warlike race, able to expel these conquerors, before whom their ancestors had fled almost without striking a blow. Some cause must also have been at work to enervate the warlike spirit of the shepherd kings at Memphis, and the wealth which the administration of Joseph had poured into their coffers from the whole of the neighbouring countries, may with some probability be pointed out as that cause. The fame of this wealth would also violently stimulate the

ambition and avarice of the hereditary Pharaohs, and doubtless it fell into their possession with the territory they recovered. Some extraordinary circumstance like that with which the inspired history supplies us is certainly needed to account for the style of magnificence that distinguishes the monuments of the era which immediately followed the expulsion of the shepherds from those of all other periods.

An inscription on the tomb of one of the officers of Amosis, which has been found at Thebes, implies that his war against the shepherds was of long duration, and that he fought many battles with them both by land and sea, before he succeeded in expelling them from Egypt; an additional proof that they were not such barbarians as the Egyptian priests have described them to be. An inscription in the quarry of Mansarah also relates that Amosis hewed stones from thence for the construction of the temples of Ptha, Apis, and Amoun, at Memphis, in the twenty-second year of his reign.

# CHAPTER X.

## THE MONUMENTAL HISTORY OF EGYPT.

### PART II.

THE Pharaohs of the eighteenth dynasty will now require our attention. According to the Greek authors, this was the most celebrated of all the generations of kings that ever sat upon the throne of Egypt. The monuments fully confirm this account. There is scarcely a temple or palace in Egypt which has not been founded by this illustrious race of monarchs.

As the tablet of Abydos is the link by which the written and the monumental histories of ancient Egypt are connected together, and as this invaluable document principally respects the eighteenth dynasty, we give a few of the coincidences between it and the lists of Manetho, which establish the certainty of the connexion. The fifth legible ring in the second line of the tablet from the right,* constantly occurs on other monuments in connexion with a second ring. The two are here subjoined; they read together,

"Sun, or Pharaoh, lord of the region of Moue," Amosis, that is, "son of the moon." The interpretation of the remainder of the tablet shows that this is the hieroglyphic name of Amosis, the last monarch of the seventeenth dynasty, who

* See page 179.

expelled the shepherds. He is also called by Manetho, Misphragmouthosis.*

The complete name of the ring which follows immediately to the right reads,

"Lord of the universe, (governor devoted to the sun,) lord of the diadems of Egypt, (Amenotph;") that is, "the consecrated to Amoun." The first monarch of the eighteenth dynasty is named by Manetho Amenoph.

The ring which follows reads, when completed,

"Lord of the universe, (the great sun devoted to the world,) lord of the diadems of Egypt, (like the sun Thothmos,") which means "the son of Thoth." The second monarch of this dynasty was Thothmosis, according to Manetho.

The seventh name from thence, the sixth from the right of the middle line, offers a still more remarkable coincidence: it reads, when complete,

"The king of an obedient people, (sun, lord of justice,) son of the sun, (Amenoph) governor of the region of purity and justice," (Egypt.) The eighth monarch of the eighteenth dynasty, in Manetho's lists, is Amenoph, who was called also by the Greeks Memnon.†

Pausanias informs us, in his description of Attica, of a celebrated colossus at Thebes which emitted melodious sounds at sunrise, and which the Greeks called

* Eratosthenes explains that all the kings of Egypt had three or four names; and it appears from the monuments that this is also the case with private individuals.

† G. Sync. Chronographia, p. 72, etc.

Memnon, the son of Aurora, (the morning;) but he adds, "The Thebans say that it is not the statue of Memnon, but of Phamenoph, one of their countrymen." The remains of this colossus still exist on the plain of Thebes, covered with Greek and Latin inscriptions, recording the visits of persons of all ranks, and at all periods of the domination of the Ptolemies and the emperors, to hear the mysterious sounds which issued from it. One of them reads thus: "I, Publius Balbinus, have heard Memnon or Phamenoph* uttering his divine sounds." On the base of this statue is inscribed in large hieroglyphic characters, of highly finished and perfect execution, the royal legend we are now considering. We cannot conceive of better evidence, either of the identity of this ancient monarch, or of the authenticity of the documents which establish it.†

The purport of the entire tablet having been to record the divine honours and gifts bestowed by Sesostris, by whose command it was engraven, upon the whole of his ancestry, the last line is entirely occupied with the repetitions of his name.

By the further aid of facts recorded on other monuments, a complete genealogical table of this illustrious line of warriors and statesmen has been made, which is here subjoined.

| 18th Dynasty. | Reigned. Years | months | Began B.C. |
|---|---|---|---|
| The 1st king was named Amenophis I., the son of Amosis . | 30 | 7 | 1822 |
| His queen, Ahmos Nofre Ari. | | | |

* *Ph* is the Egyptian definite article. The colossus was most probably named by the Egyptians in common speech *Ph*amenoph; that is, The Amenoph.

† An interesting account of these inscriptions will be found in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, vol. ii. part 1.

| 18th Dynasty. | Reigned. Years | months | Began B. C. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2nd, Thothmosis I., his son . | 13 | | 1791 |
| His queen, Ahmos. | | | |
| 3rd, Thothmosis II., his son . | 20 | 7 | 1778 |
| His queen, Amon Mi. | | | |
| 4th, Amense, his sister . . | 21 | 9 | 1757 |
| Her first husband, Thothmosis | | | |
| Her second, Amenumis | | | |
| 5th, Thothmosis III., Mœris, son of Amense | 12 | 9 | 1736 |
| His queen, Ramaite | | | |
| 6th, Amenophis II., son of Mœris . | 25 | 10 | 1728 |
| 7th, Thothmosis IV., his son . | 9 | 8 | 1697 |
| His queen Thmau Hemwa | | | |
| 8th, Amenophis III., (Memnon) . | 30 | 5 | 1687 |
| His queen, Taia | | | |
| 9th, Horus, his son . . | 38 | 5 | 1657 |
| 10th, Ramses I., his son . . | 9 | | 1619 |
| 11th, Sethos I. . . . | 32 | 8 | 1610 |
| His first wife Tsire | | | |
| His second Touea | | | |
| 12th, Ramses II., his son . . . | 5 | 5 | 1577 |
| 13th, Ramses III., Sesostris (son of Sethos I. and Touea) | 68 | 2 | 1571 |
| His first queen, Nofre Ari | | | |
| His second, Isenofre | | | |
| 14th, Sethos II., his son . . | 5 | | 1566 |
| His queen, Ise-nophre | | | |
| 15th, Thaosor, his daughter . | 19 | 6 | 1498 |
| Her husband, Siptha Sethos | | | |
| 16th, Sethos III., son of Sethos II. . | 5 | 3 | 1479 |

The monuments have preserved some record of the actions of every individual of this long succession of monarchs; so that they have added to human knowledge an important chapter in the world's history which had been entirely lost.

Amosis was the head of this great dynasty, who covered the entire face of their native country with wonders. Superb temples are said to have been erected to the local divinities in every city of Egypt by one or other of them; and their ruins, still existing, bear testimony to the truth of this account. They also crowded the plains of Thebes and Memphis with temples and palaces, the mutilated remains of which in the former city still set at defiance the powers of language to describe the sensations which the sight of them excites in the mind of the spectator, and force even from the most incredulous the confession that no imagination can conceive the combination of splendour and magnificence which must have overwhelmed the senses of him who, 3000 years ago, was privileged to enter the then hallowed precincts of Thebes in its glory.

The inspired narrative of the wealth of Egypt through Joseph's administration, solves the difficulty we otherwise find in accounting for the style of profuse magnificence of the public monuments of every description of the monarchs who reigned in the immediately succeeding period. Those who preceded and followed them (for the period is limited to the 346 years of the duration of this dynasty) fall greatly below them in these particulars. We have already considered those of their predecessors, of which, except the pyramids, the remains are small indeed. While their successors on the throne of Egypt for 1000 years afterwards found more than enough for the exercise of their energies in the vain attempt to finish the vast piles of building which their predecessors of the eighteenth dynasty had begun; so that some of them were destroyed by Cambyses the Persian, before they were finished, and others which escaped his

fury, were completed long afterwards by the Ptolemies, and even by the Roman emperors. Some peculiar circumstances in the history of Egypt were certainly required to account for these singular facts; and once more the Scripture narrative supplies us with those circumstances.

The monuments show that a period of profound tranquillity followed the expulsion of the shepherds from Egypt, which was employed by the monarchs who successively occupied the throne during the more than 100 years it lasted, in adorning the whole extent of Egypt and Nubia with temples and palaces, and in the execution of vast works of public utility, for the purpose of developing more fully the resources of this most fertile country.

The arts of design flourished greatly under these Pharaohs, and the style of execution of their earlier monuments approaches (perhaps scarcely equals) that of the more ancient period which has already been considered, and much surpasses in delicacy and beauty that of the later monarchs of this illustrious line. The obelisks at Karnac in Thebes, which were erected by queen Amense, are said to surpass in these respects all other great monuments of Egyptian art now in existence.

A short history of the reign of the son and successor of Amense, who was named Mœris, will give some idea of the extent to which these illustrious kings adorned and benefited their country.

At Thebes, Mœris carried forward the great designs of his mother and his remoter ancestors in the temple at El Assasif, of which a few scattered blocks are the only present remains. He was the builder of a great part of the immense constructions of Karnac. He also added several of its most

superb halls to the stately palace of Medinet Abou, the foundation of which had been laid by his ancestor and predecessor Amenophis I., who stands at the head of the dynasty. In addition to these great works with which he adorned the capital, temples were erected to the tutelary deities by the munificence of Pharaoh Mœris, during the thirteen years of his short reign, in a large proportion of the provincial cities of Upper Egypt and Nubia. At Elytha, at Esne, at Edfou, and at Ombos, in Upper Egypt, remains more or less extensive, and all of beautiful execution, still bear inscribed upon them the name of this great king. This is also the case at Wady Halfa, at Ibrim, and at Amada, in Nubia. Ruins of considerable extent in these places still attest the magnificence of Pharaoh Mœris, and the riches of Egypt in his days, which could extend themselves even to this remote dependency. Diodorus Siculus informs us that he also erected the propyla of the great temple of Memphis, and that they surpassed all other similar constructions in magnificence. These, and doubtless many others, have entirely perished in the course of the calamities which have befallen Egypt since the days of Pharaoh Mœris.

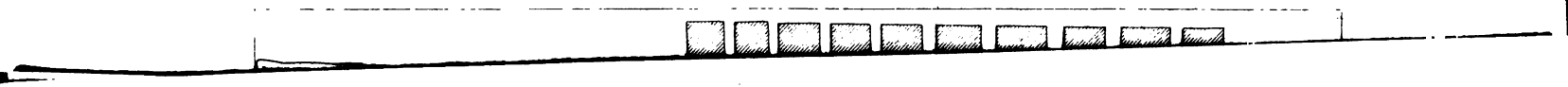
But it was not merely to these works of magnificence and decoration that Mœris owed the renown and the grateful remembrance of after ages. He was also the author of one of the most stupendous works of utility of which history has preserved the record.

By means of canals and embankments he directed the waters of the Nile, at the period of inundation, to a vast lake, which, taking advantage of the direction of the levels, he had excavated in a swampy portion of Middle Egypt, to the west of the river, and nearly on the borders of the desert:

When the inundation subsided, the waters were prevented from leaving the lake by means of flood-gates.

As this lake, when completed, was nearly a hundred miles in circumference, he had thus an immense supply of that which, as we have already seen, is so essential to the fertility of Egypt; and was thereby often enabled to remedy the defects of an insufficient inundation, and to convey away the waters of a superfluous one; both equally mischievous. Thus eminently did Mœris serve his country. The lake was called after his name; and Herodotus, who has preserved the account of it, also informs us, that he erected two pyramids in the midst of it, having a colossal figure seated on the summit of each. These have long since perished, but the lake itself still remains, and is called the lake of Feyoum.

But amid all these details of the greatness and magnificence of Egypt, the Christian's heart will still be with the people of God: and he will naturally inquire, What evidence do the monuments afford of the state in Egypt at this period, of the descendants and lineage of Joseph, by whose instrumentality God had poured the wealth that accomplished these wonders into its coffers? We answer him in the words of holy Scripture:—"The Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in morter, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour," Ex. i. 13, 14; and as an unanswerable proof of this, we refer to the annexed design, which is copied from the tomb of Rek-sharé, the chief architect of the temples and palaces of Thebes, under Pharaoh Mœris. Never, perhaps, has so striking a pictorial comment as this upon the sacred text



been before recovered. The physiognomy of the Jews it is impossible to mistake; and the splashes of clay with which their bodies are covered, the air of close and intense labour that is conveyed by the grouping on the left side of the picture, and above all, the Egyptian taskmaster seated with his heavy baton, whose remorseless blows would doubtless visit the least relaxation of the slaves he was driving from their wearisome and toilsome task of making bricks and spreading them to dry in the burning sun of Egypt, give a vivid impression of the exactitude of the Scripture phrase, "all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour." The inscription at the top of the picture, to the right, reads, "Captives brought by his majesty," (Mœris,) "to build the temple of the great god." This means either that Mœris was the king "that arose, that knew not Joseph, and that reduced the children of Israel to servitude;" or, more probably, that the family or gang of Israelites which are here represented, had been marched up from Goshen, and attached especially to the building of the temples at Thebes. This was also the case with prisoners of war.

The group of Egyptians to the right of the picture affords also a confirmation of the literal correctness of the inspired narrative, and of the uniformity of all things in Egypt. We read in the 5th chapter of Exodus, that when Moses and Aaron had been before Pharaoh, "he said, Behold the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of bricks which they did make hereto-

fore ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof." In consequence of this arbitrary order, "the taskmasters hasted them, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, *were beaten*, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task, in making brick both yesterday and to-day, as heretofore?" Exod. v. 6—14. The picture before us shows that this cruel mode of procedure had always been the practice during the bondage in Egypt. Two of the Egyptian officers over the Israelites, sufficiently distinguished from them by their head-dresses and complexions, are compelled by the blows of the taskmasters over them, to bear themselves the vessels of clay and the brick yoke, and to complete the work which they had failed to exact from the captives entrusted to their charge. That these men had not come forth to labour, is sufficiently indicated by the right hand figure with the yoke, who, having not taken up his burden, has not yet girt his loins, like his companions and all the other labourers in the picture, and also according to the invariable practice of the east, but still wears his dress loose, after the fashion of the officer who is sitting in the centre with the baton, and of the superior taskmaster, (probably the personage by whom the tomb was excavated,) who is represented as beating the officer, his companion.

This incident conveys a fearful impression of the rigour of the bondage.

We also find in this most interesting picture, the full establishment of our conjecture in considering the Scripture history, that the Israelites would adopt the dress and man-

ners of the Egyptians. The cap worn by them is the ancient Memphitic cap, which appears on the monuments of the era of the pyramids, and of the seventeenth dynasty. The wig worn by the Egyptians in the picture before us, the monuments show to have been an innovation which was probably introduced by the eighteenth dynasty. It was the universal custom to shave the head and beard in Egypt. But it may be observed that in this picture the Israelites have their beards half grown, to denote the abject and slavish nature of servitude, which did not allow them the leisure to attend even to this necessary act of cleanliness. This was a common mode of denoting earnestness and haste with the Egyptian artists. In the stupendous reliefs at Ipsambul, Sesostris fights his battles unshaven; and even appears in this condition before the gods, to denote the entire possession of his mind with the purpose before him.

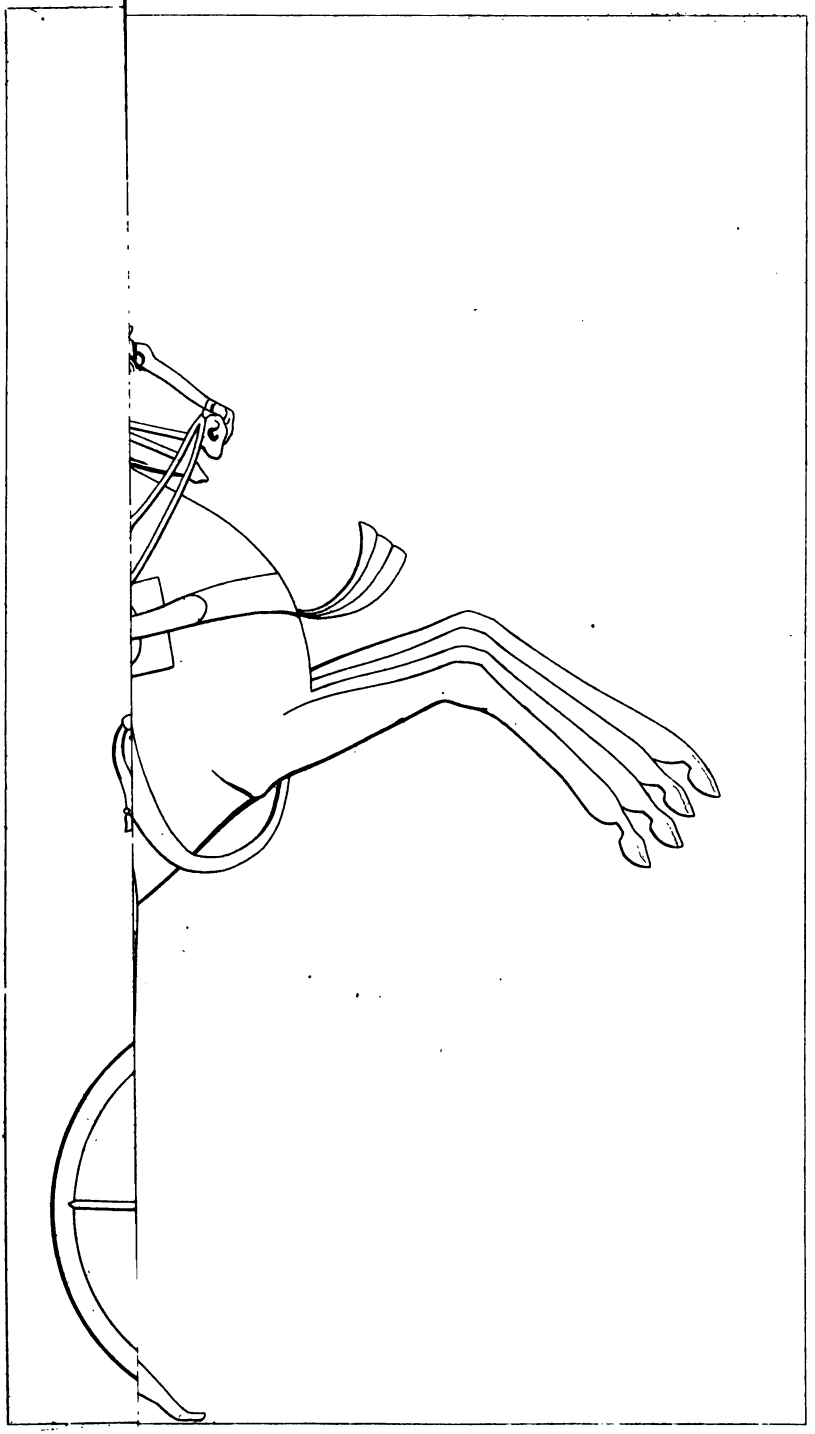
Though this picture may be already familiar to the reader in some form or other, it was thought better to give here a large exact representation of the plate of Rosellini, whence all those copies have been taken, in order to convey some idea of the extent to which it will subserve the illustration of Scripture.

Great, then, as were the Pharaohs of the eighteenth dynasty, and marvellous as are the remains of the mighty works they accomplished, it is only as the remorseless oppressors of God's chosen people that they are known to sacred history; and to illustrate the history and the manners of that once despised and persecuted race whom they thought to grind to the very dust beneath the hoof of their oppression, is the best and noblest purpose which the gorgeous relics of ancient grandeur will subserve.

The first war, of the occurrence of which under the eighteenth dynasty the monuments have preserved any record, took place in the reign of Thothmosis IV., the second successor of Mœris. The southern frontier of Nubia was threatened by the people of Lybia, and he obtained a victory over them in the seventh year of his reign, which is inscribed on the rocks of the island of Philœ. But it was not until later in the dynasty that the warriors arose who carried the terror of the arms of Egypt far into Europe and Asia, and into the very heart of Africa. Amenophis Memnon, the successor of Thothmosis, is shown by the monuments to have shone more as a statesman and benefactor to his country than as a warrior. He was the founder of the superb palace, or rather range of palaces, at Luxor, in Thebes; and also of temples on the islands of Beghe and Elephantine on the southern frontier of Egypt, as well as at Sohleb in Nubia. But these monuments show the wars in which he engaged to have been, like those of his father, merely defensive wars against the black nations on the south frontier of his kingdom.

Sethos, the third successor of Thothmosis, is the first of these monarchs who figures as a warrior rather than a statesman. His exploits are recorded on the walls of the palace at Gournou in Thebes, of which he was also the founder. He is probably the Sethos Ramses of Herodotus, who, as he informs us, invaded Asia, and conquered every where. His title is the third ring from the right in the second row of the tablet of Abydos. The entire name is here subjoined. It reads,

("Pharaoh, confirmed in justice, the servant of Phtha, Sethei.") The fifth character in the second ring, which represents a sitting figure with the head of an ass, is Seth, or Typhon, the evil principle. This character is almost



ANS.

always defaced on the monuments, as is the case with a statue of Sethos in the British Museum. Probably it was on account of some notion of impropriety in writing this name, which arose at a later period. The superb reliefs which cover the exterior wall of the palace at Gournou give an historical account of the invasion of Asia by this monarch.

The annexed engraving is a copy of one of this series of historical paintings; it represents Sethos in the act of killing the chief of the Scythians. The magnificent tomb opened by Belzoni in the valley of the kings, near Thebes, once contained the embalmed body of this monarch. But the arts even in his time were beginning to decline, as the monuments sufficiently show; and this becomes still more visible in the reigns of his two sons, who both successively sat on the throne of Egypt, and who both walked in the footsteps of their father, and exhausted the energies of their native country in distant invasions. The oldest of them, Ramses II., reigned only five years: probably he was killed in battle. His wars, both in Asia and Africa, are recorded on the sides of the cave at Beit el Walley, in Nubia.

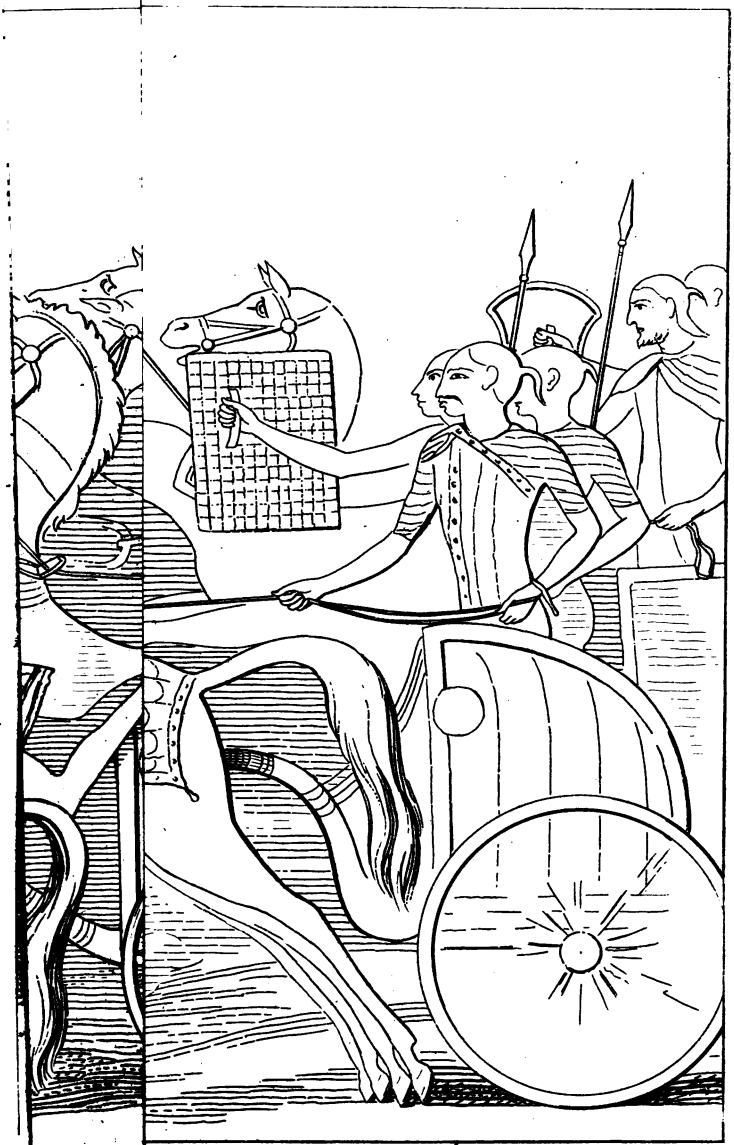
He was succeeded by his brother, Ramses III., called by the Greek authors Sesostris. The historical fragments preserved from the relations of the Egyptian priests by Herodotus and Diodorus, represent this monarch to have been the greatest of all the Pharaohs that ever sat upon the throne of Egypt; and the many particulars they relate concerning him are in a very remarkable manner proved to be correct by the monuments that are still in existence. According to the tablet of Abydos, of which he was the author, his name reads—

(Pharaoh, sun, guardian of justice, approved of the sun, the beloved of Amoun Ramesses.) The monarch whose name appears in the corresponding place in the lists of Manetho, is said to have reigned sixty-eight years. A tablet now in the British Museum is dated in the sixty-sixth year of his reign. Diodorus Siculus says that he was king seven generations after Mœris. A glance at the table of this dynasty, (see p. 217,) which is constructed entirely upon the authority of the monuments, will show that this is also literally correct.

Sesostris wished to conquer the whole world, and for this purpose he raised a vast army, consisting of infantry and chariots. His first campaign was against the neighbouring nations of Ethiopia, whom he entirely subdued, and imposed upon them an annual tribute of ebony, gold, and ivory. He then built a fleet of 300 ships on the Red Sea, by the aid of which he took possession of all the islands and strong places on the eastern coast, and passed through the straits of Babel Mandel, to the shores of India. At the same time his army traversed Asia, eastward through India to the Ganges, and northward through Scythia to the river Tanais. He afterwards entered Europe, and penetrated into Thrace, and then returned to Egypt along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, leaving everywhere the record of his conquests on tablets sculptured in the neighbourhood of the places he had subdued. This expedition lasted nine years.

There is now in the British Museum a very singular manuscript, found in one of the tombs at Thebes, which originally belonged to the private collection of M. Sallier of Aix-la-Chapelle.* It is a kind of idyll, or poem in dialogue

* The first line of this MS. will be found above, p. 84.



between Sesostris and the gods. It celebrates the feats of arms of Sesostris in Africa, Asia, and Europe; describing his victories over the inhabitants of Ethiopia, Syria, Arabia, Ionia, Scythia, and Bactria. These great achievements, it further informs us, were completed in the ninth year of his reign. Nor is there wanting confirmation in abundance on the walls of the temples of the exact truth of the narration contained in this extraordinary manuscript. The vast design on the walls of the cave of Ipsambul in Nubia relates the exploits of Sesostris in Mesopotamia, the Scripture name of which, Naharaim, is frequently repeated in the hieroglyphic inscription that explains the picture.

The annexed plate is a composition from the part of this great picture which represents the attack of the Egyptian chariots upon those of the Syrians. It is merely rendered intelligible by the aid of modern perspective: the costumes, the positions, and the groups, are all exact copies from the original. Much spirit and fire may be observed in the design of these reliefs; but in the mechanical part of the execution, the monuments of the period are certainly inferior to those of an earlier date.

We take this opportunity of remarking, that the horse was only used in ancient Egypt for warlike purposes, yoked in the chariot. The art of riding the horse would appear by the monuments to have been unknown there in early times. It was probably of Scythian origin.

On the external wall of the palace at Luxor, we have also the details of the conquests of Sesostris to the north of Syria, in the vast regions which were included in ancient geography under the general name of Scythia. The hieroglyphic

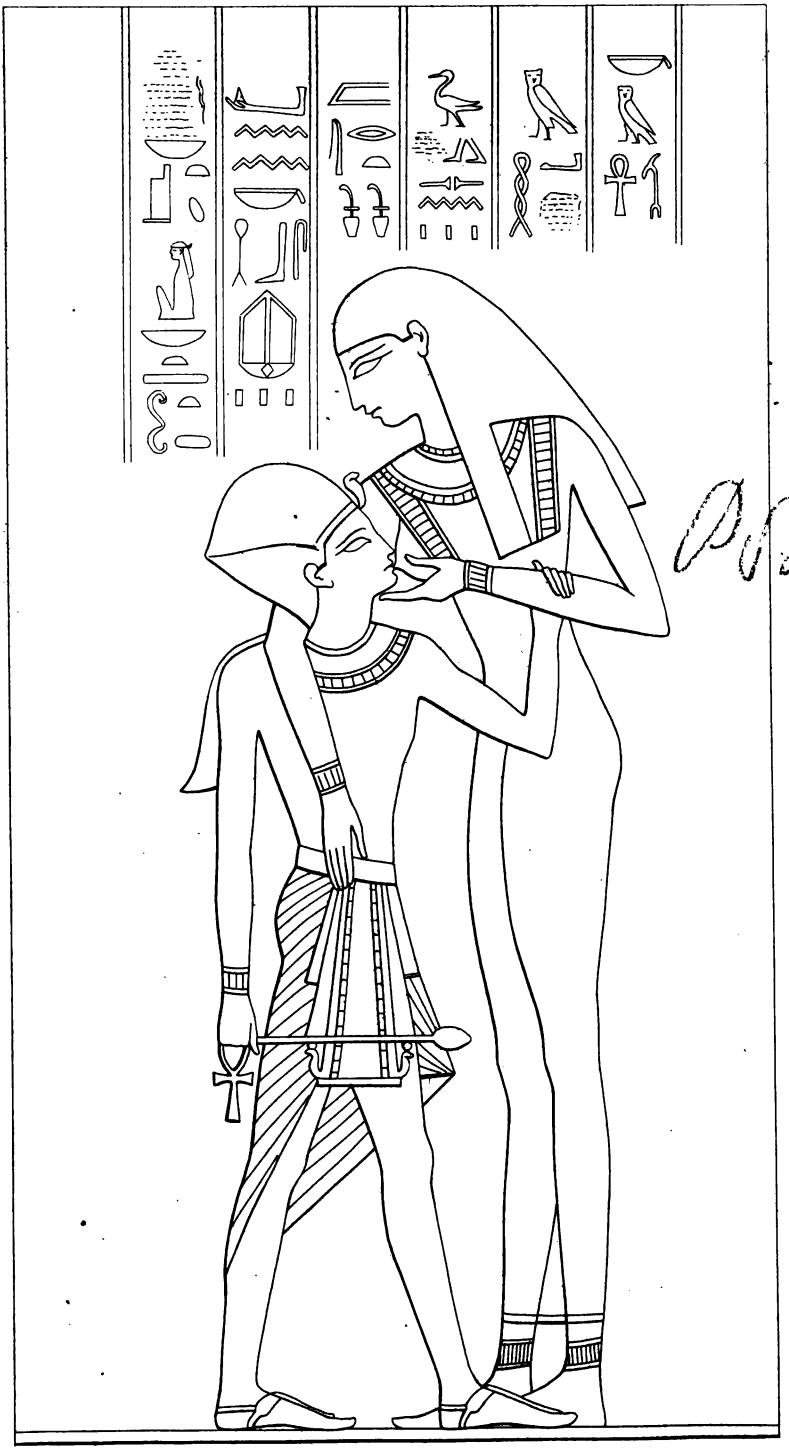
name of this region is also composed of the same consonants, . His exploits in Ethiopia, called after its Scripture designation, Cush, כוש were likewise once included in the same series of designs.

We can even verify the fact, that he caused tablets to be sculptured recording his exploits in the countries through which he passed. Such a tablet, bearing the hieroglyphic name of Sesostris, has been copied by Mr. Bonomi at Nahar el Kelb, near Beyroot, in Syria, and has been published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, vol. iii. part 1.

The Greek historians also relate, that on his return from this expedition, he adorned Thebes and Memphis with temples and palaces, far surpassing in magnificence those of any other Pharaoh that either preceded or followed him, and that he also built a temple in every city of Egypt to their respective tutelary deities. The reader must not here be detained with the detail of the vast mass of monumental evidence, which establishes this historical fact beyond the possibility of doubt.* Suffice it to say that, both at Thebes and Memphis, the proofs of the splendour of the reign of Sesostris far surpass, in number and magnificence, those of any of his predecessors or successors. This is also observable, in a large proportion of the other cities of Egypt and Nubia.

The annexed engraving represents a very common device on the propyla of temples erected by this monarch in Nubia. It represents the young Sesostris suckled by Isis, the protecting goddess of that country. The inscription reads,

* A superb collection of engravings from monuments erected by this monarch, will be found in Rosellini's great work, "I monumenti dell Egitto," M.R. plates 75 to 117.



ISIS, THE GODDESS OF NUBIA, AND THE YOUNG SESOSTRIS.

Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row, 1841.

"The discourse of Isis the lady of Nubia; we give thee recurrence of festivals" (length of days) "with my milk pure life shall pass into thy members."

The protection of the gods over the founders of the temples, and their participation in the nature of the divinities, were denoted by this device.

The Greek historians relate, that Sesostris did not allow a single Egyptian to be employed upon any of the public works he executed, but imposed this drudgery upon the prisoners of war whom he had taken.* The interesting relief from the tomb of Reksharé, has already shown us that such had been the practice with his predecessors in Egypt. Moreover, all representations of battles on the temples are concluded by a scene of triumph, in which the conqueror is represented dragging to the feet of the sanguinary demons, who as gods, sat upon the throne of God in the temples of Egypt, long lines of captives, whose physiognomies and

From Ipsambul.

* Diod. Sic. *ut supra*, i. 56.

features evidently denote their foreign extraction. The conqueror holds one end of the cord, which passes along the whole line, and by which the arms of the prisoners are tied in the most painful positions. Sometimes behind the back, sometimes in front, and even over the head, in postures wherein the joints must have been dislocated and the bones broken. The cries of these unfortunate beings, evidently formed a part of the horrid solemnity, and they are often vividly depicted in the act of uttering them. The prisoners thus devoted to the god, were afterwards employed in constructing and repairing temples to his service.

The details already given, will sufficiently prove that the monuments of Egypt were only designed to preserve the record of deeds which reflected honour and glory upon that country, and its monarchs; and therefore, it will be heard without surprise, that no trace of the great events which accompanied the departure of Israel from Egypt, have been, or probably ever will be, discovered upon them. The Egyptian priests were not more anxious to perpetuate the remembrance of their prosperous and fortunate sovereigns, than they were to consign to perpetual infamy and oblivion, the names and actions of those of them under whose reigns misfortunes had happened to Egypt. One of the tombs of the kings at Thebes, is so studiously defaced throughout with the chisel, that even the name of the Pharaoh who had employed his life in preparing it for his long home, is no longer legible; evidently his reign had been an unfortunate one. Other proofs of the prevalence of this custom are shown on the monuments, to which the testimony of the Greek historians may also be added. It is therefore clear that there were no events in the whole history

of Egypt, which the priesthood would endeavour so carefully to consign to oblivion, as their own defeat by Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh, the ten fearful plagues that followed, the departure of Israel loaded with the spoils of Egypt, and the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. So that it could only be in ignorance of this their custom, that any monumental record of these events could be expected.

The monuments, and the history of Manetho, however, combine to show us that very shortly upon the death of Sesostris, heavy misfortunes befell Egypt. He was succeeded by his thirteenth son, Sethos II.; and five other sovereigns successively occupied the throne in the thirty years that elapsed from the death of Sesostris, to the termination of the dynasty; during nineteen years of which, Egypt was ruled by a queen. The monuments have preserved but very few records of this period, the history none. We know, however, from the testimony of the former, that the first monarch of the nineteenth dynasty was the son of the last of the eighteenth. The foundation of a new dynasty by the son of a king, indicates that some great change took place in the fortunes of Egypt during the reign of the father. The history of the nineteenth dynasty* informs us, accordingly, that early in his short reign, the last of this lineage of great kings fled with his infant son to Ethiopia, where he died, from a second invasion of the shepherds who again overran the whole of Egypt. We plainly gather from this event, a general indication of the extent to which the resources and power of Egypt must have declined, during the very short period which had elapsed between the reign

* Josephus cont. Ap. *u. s.*

of this monarch, and the death of his grandfather Sesostris, who had invaded and conquered the known world. A careful examination, also, of Manetho's account of this invasion, preserved by Josephus, affords the evident traces of some previous event, which occasioned this disaster. He informs us, that the predecessor of this unfortunate monarch had drawn forth, from the borders of Egypt into the eastern desert, certain diseased and leprous, as well as wicked persons, slaves, who joined the shepherds, and thereby contributed materially to the success of the invasion.* This is evidently the distorted and malignant allusion to the Exodus, which the tenor of their narration compelled the Egyptian priests to make, in order to account for the second invasion of the shepherds.

Ramses Meiamoun, the first monarch of the nineteenth dynasty, expelled the shepherds from Egypt about twenty years afterwards. Not contented with this his success, he attempted also to recover the conquests of his ancestor Sesostris in Africa, Asia, and Europe, as the reliefs on the vast palace of Medinet Abou, at Thebes, which was founded by him, inform us. He was, however, the last of the Pharaohs who rivalled his great ancestors of the preceding dynasty, either in his conquests or his edifices, and these his efforts seem to have exhausted the resources of his native country; for it stands recorded on the imperishable granite of her monuments, that from thenceforth to the end of her history, the arm of Egypt was broken. The greatest works of his successors, of which any trace remains, consist in attempts to finish or restore the temples or the

* Contra Apionem, lib.i., c. 26, 27. In the following chapters, he plainly proves the allusion to be to the children of Israel.

palaces which had been begun in more prosperous days. Yet no event is related, either in the history of Egypt or of the world, to account for this sudden and irrecoverable decline of her resources and energies. She underwent no invasions or conquests, her institutions continued unchanged, and the succession of her princes moved onwards with great regularity for 1000 years after this period.

The Scripture narrative of the administration of Joseph, which so well accounts for the sudden greatness of Egypt under the princes of the eighteenth dynasty, tells also of a series of fearful calamities which befell that country at the exodus. These afford us equally satisfactory solution of the present difficulty, by supplying a probable reason for the national enervation into which Egypt sank immediately on the termination of that dynasty, and from which she never recovered.

The next event recorded in the inspired history, of which any illustration could reasonably be expected from the monuments of Egypt, is the invasion of Jerusalem by Pharaoh Shishak, in the reign of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. This Pharaoh is named Sesonchis in the lists of Manetho; he was the head of the twenty-second dynasty of kings which originated at Bubastis, a very ancient city of Lower Egypt. Long before the visit of the French and Italian commission to Egypt in 1828, Champollion had recognized the hieroglyphic name of this monarch, which reads—

"Pharaoh, governor of Lower Egypt, approved of the sun, the beloved of Amoun." ϢϢϤΚ Sheshonk. In the first court of the great palace of Karnac at Thebes, he found, on his visit to Egypt, a very extensive picture in

relief, commencing with the usual frontispiece of a number of captives of different nations, held by the hair, and threatened by a gigantic figure of the Pharaoh by whose orders the picture had been executed, and who in this case was Shishak. In the following picture, the same king conducts to the feet of the Theban triad, the chiefs of more than thirty nations whom he had conquered: they are tied by the neck, and each of them has an embattled buckler by his side, on which is inscribed the name of the country he represents. It was from hence that the figure was copied which we here insert, and which is now so familiar to all who take an interest in the illustration of Scripture. The hieroglyphics read (the country אאמשדוסו) which is quite a sufficiently near imitation of מלכת יהודים "the kingdom of the Jews," by a foreigner in a different character, to establish clearly its identity, which is also further proved to demonstration by the occurrence of the names

Beth horon,

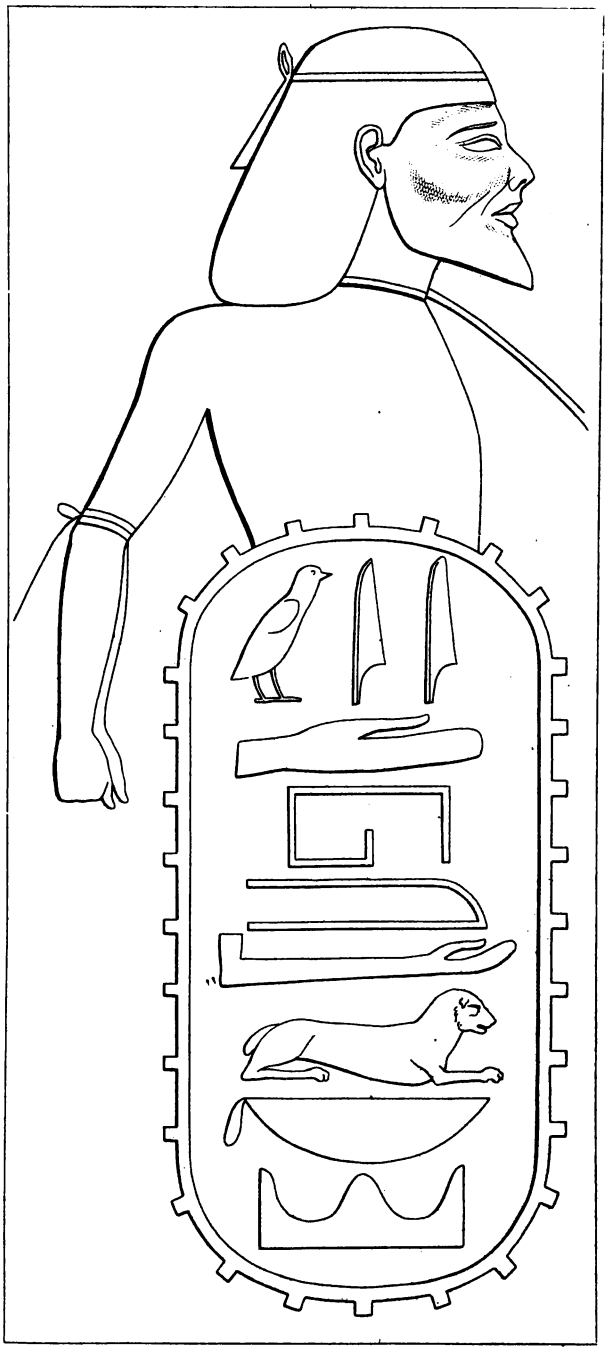
Megiddo,

Mahanaim,

and some others, on shields in the same scene. Through these towns Shishak passed in his invasion of Judea.*

The inscription which explains this very important relief, is unfortunately too much mutilated to throw any additional light upon it. The annexed plate is a faithful repetition of the copy of Rosellini;* in features it differs considerably from that published by the French. It affords us, however, a confirmation of our conjecture as to the

* M. R. pl. 147.



SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM BY SHISHAK.

FROM THE PALACE AT KARNAK.

Religious Tract Society 56 Paternoster Row. 1841.

costume of the Jews; for the prisoners in all these scenes are represented in the habit of their country. The head-dress of this captive is purely Egyptian, but he wears the beard, in obedience to the prohibition contained in Lev. xix. 27. It was doubtless in consequence of some idolatrous association, that the practice of shaving the beard was prohibited. As, apart from the inspired history, this is the only known memorial of the invasion of Shishak, its importance, as an evidence in confirmation of its truth, has been by no means overrated.

The names of the Pharaohs, Necho and Hophra, also occur on the monuments of Egypt; but their remains are too scanty to throw any new or important light upon the late period in which their names are associated with the inspired narrative.

As the time-worn monuments of Egypt were once the favourite resort of modern infidelity, our inquiries respecting them has led rather to the defence of the word of God than to a full exhibition of its truths; and the further such researches are pursued, the more evident it will be that the boastings of sceptics are vain, and that Christianity rests on a basis which cannot be shaken. It behoves the reader, however, to remember, that it is not enough to acknowledge that the Bible is true; it demands the belief of all to whom

it comes. In this inspired volume, our Lord Jesus Christ is made known as the great and only Redeemer: in Him, therefore, we must entirely confide, and through the operations of his gracious Spirit, "bring forth fruit unto holiness," if we would escape the condemnation denounced against unbelief, and enjoy the blessings presented to us in the gospel.

THE END.

W. Tyler, Printer, 5, Bolt-court, London.

Repd. H.14.4.47